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# THE HOLY QUR-ĀN :

ARABIC TEXT WITH AN ENGLISH  
TRANSLATION AND COMMENTARY

BY

'ABDULLĀH YŪSUF 'ALĪ



Three-Volume Edition

Vol I, containing introductory matter and Sūras I to IX  
(Being Parts I to X)

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## DEDICATION

To all who love and reverence the Book,  
And earnestly strive to find in it,  
Not a reflection of their own fancies,  
But a clue to Unity, Discipline,  
And the Call to higher matters of the spirit,  
I dedicate this humble effort at Interpretation,  
The fruit of my Life, Thought, and Study

'ABDULLAH YÜSUF 'ALI,  
(*Servant of Islam*)



I DO not wish to write a long Preface I wish merely to explain the history of my Project, the scope and plan of this work, and the objects I have held in view

In separate introductory Notes I have mentioned the useful books to which I have referred, under the headings Commentaries on the Qur ān, Translations of the Qur ān, and Useful Works of Reference I have similarly explained the system which I have followed in the transliteration of Arabic words and names, the Abbreviations I have used, and the principal divisions of the Qur ān

It may be asked Is there any need for a fresh English Translation? To those who ask this question I commend a careful consideration of the facts which I have set out in my Note on Translations After they have read it, I would invite them to take any particular passage in Part I, say 11 74 or 11 102, or 11 164 in the second Part and compare it with any previous version they choose If they find that I have helped them even the least bit further in understanding its meaning, or appreciating its beauty, or catching something of the grandeur of the original, I would claim that my humble attempt is justified

It is the duty of every Muslim, man, woman, or child, to read the Qur ān and understand it according to his own capacity If any one of us attains to some knowledge or understanding of it by study, contemplation, and the test of life, both outward and inward, it is his duty, according to his capacity, to instruct others, and share with them the joy and peace which result from contact with the spiritual world The Qur ān—indeed every religious book—has to be read, not only with the tongue and voice and eyes, but with the best light that our intellect can supply, and even more, with the truest and purest light which our heart and conscience can give us It is in this spirit that I would have my readers approach the Qur ān

It was between the ages of four and five that I first learned to read its Arabic words, to revel in its rhythm and music, and wonder at its meaning I have a dim recollection of the *Khatm* ceremony which closed that stage It was called "completion" it really just *began* a spiritual awakening that has gone on ever since My revered father taught me Arabic, but I must have imbibed from him into my innermost being something more,—something which told me that all the world's thoughts, all the world's most beautiful languages and literatures, are but vehicles for that ineffable message which comes to the heart in rare moments of ecstasy The soul of mysticism and ecstasy is in the Qur ān, as well as that plain guidance for the plain man which a world in a hurry affects to consider as sufficient It is good to make this personal confession, to an age in which it is in the highest degree unfashionable to speak of religion or spiritual peace or consolation, an age in which words like these draw forth only derision, pity, or contempt

I have explored Western lands, Western manners, and the depths of Western thought and Western learning, to an extent which has rarely fallen to the lot of an Eastern mortal But I have never lost touch with my Eastern heritage Through all my successes and failures I have learned to rely more and more upon the one true thing in all life—the voice that speaks in a tongue above that of mortal man For me the embodiment of that voice has been in the noble words of the Arabic Qur ān, which I have tried to translate for myself and apply to my experience again and again The service of the Qur ān has been the pride and the privilege of many Muslims I felt that with such life experience as has fallen to my lot, my service to the Qur ān should be to present it in a fitting garb in English That ambition I have cherished in my mind for more than forty years I have collected books and materials for it I have visited places, undertaken journeys, taken notes, sought the society of men, and tried to explore their thoughts and hearts, in order to equip myself for the task Sometimes I have considered it too stupendous for me,—the double task of understanding the original, and reproducing its nobility, its beauty, its poetry, its grandeur, and its sweet practical reasonable application to everyday

experience Then I have blamed myself for lack of courage,—the spiritual courage of men who dared all in the Cause which was so dear to them

Two sets of apparently accidental circumstances at last decided me A man's life is subject to inner storms far more devastating than those in the physical world around him In such a storm, in the bitter anguish of a personal sorrow which nearly unseated my reason and made life seem meaningless, a new hope was born out of a systematic pursuit of my long cherished project Watered by tears, my manuscript began to grow in depth and earnestness if not in bulk I guarded it like a secret treasure Wanderer that I am, I carried it about, thousands of miles, to all sorts of countries and among all sorts of people At length, in the city of Lahore, I happened to mention the matter to some young people who held me in respect and affection They showed an enthusiasm and an eagerness which surprised me They almost took the matter out of my hands They asked for immediate publication I had various bits ready, but not even one complete *Sipāra* They made me promise to complete at least one *Sipāra* before I left Lahore As if by magic, a publisher, a *kātib* (calligraphist to write the Arabic Text), an engraver of blocks for such text, and a printer were found, all equally anxious to push forward the scheme Blessed be youth, for its energy and determination "Where others flinch, rash youth will dare!"

Gentle and discerning reader! what I wish to present to you is an English Interpretation, side by side with the Arabic Text The English shall be, not a mere substitution of one word for another, but the best expression I can give to the fullest meaning which I can understand from the Arabic Text The rhythm, music, and exalted tone of the original should be reflected in the English Interpretation It may be but a faint reflection, but such beauty and power as my pen can command shall be brought to its service I want to make English itself an Islamic language, if such a person as I can do it And I must give you all the accessory aid which I can In rhythmic prose, or free verse (whichever you like to call it), I prepare the atmosphere for you in a running Commentary Introducing the subject generally, I come to the actual *Sūras* Where they are short, I give you one or two paragraphs of my rhythmic Commentary to prepare you for the text Where the *Sūra* is long, I introduce the subject matter in short appropriate paragraphs of the Commentary from time to time, each indicating the particular verses to which it refers The paragraphs of the running Commentary are numbered consecutively, with some regard to the connection with the preceding and the following paragraphs It is possible to read this running rhythmic Commentary by itself to get a general bird's eye view of the contents of the Holy Book before you proceed to the study of the Book itself

The text in English is printed in larger type than the running Commentary, in order to distinguish, at a glance, the substance from the shadow It is also displayed differently, in parallel columns with the Arabic Text Each *Sūra* and the verse of each *Sūra* is separately numbered, and the numbers are shown page by page The system of numbering the verses has not been uniform in previous translations European editors and translators have allowed their numbering to diverge considerably from that accepted in the East This causes confusion in giving and verifying references The different *Qirā'ats* sometimes differ as to the punctuation stops and the numbering of the verses This is not a vital matter, but it causes confusion in references It is important that at least in Islamic countries one system of numbering should be adopted I have adopted mainly that of the Egyptian edition published under the authority of the King of Egypt This will probably be accepted in Egypt and in Arabic speaking countries, as those countries generally look up to Egypt in matters of literature I am glad to see that the text shortly to be published by the Anjuman-i-Himāyat-i-Islām of Lahore is following the same

system of numbering. I recommend to other publishers in India the same good example. If once this is done we shall have a uniform system of numbering. I have retained the numbering of Sections, as it is universally used in the Arabic copies, and marks a logical division of the *Sūras*. I have supplied a further aid to the reader in indicating sub-divisions of the Sections into paragraphs. They are not numbered, but are distinguished by the use of a flowery initial letter.

In translating the Text I have aired no views of my own, but followed the received Commentators. Where they differ among themselves, I have had to choose what appeared to me to be the most reasonable opinion from all points of view. Where it is a question merely of words, I have not considered the question important enough to discuss in the Notes, but where it is a question of substance, I hope adequate explanations will be found in the Notes. Where I have departed from the literal translation in order to express the spirit of the original better in English, I have explained the literal meaning in the Notes. For example, see ii 104 n and ii 26 n. In choosing an English word for an Arabic word a translator necessarily exercises his own judgment and may be unconsciously expressing a point of view, but that is inevitable.

Let me explain the scope of the Notes. I have made them as short as possible consistently with the object I have in view, *viz*, to give to the English reader, scholar as well as general reader, a fairly complete but concise view of what I understand to be the meaning of the Text. To discuss theological controversies or enter into polemical arguments I have considered outside my scope. Such discussions and arguments may be necessary and valuable, but they should find a place in separate treatises, if only out of respect to the Holy Book. Besides, such discussions leave no room for more important matters on which present-day readers desire information. In this respect our Commentators have not always been discreet. On questions of law, the Qur-ān lays down general principles, and these I have explained. I have avoided technical details: these will be found discussed in their proper place in my book on "Anglo-Muhammadan Law." Nor have I devoted much space to grammatical or philological Notes. On these points I consider that the labours of the vast body of our learned men in the past have left little new to say now. There is usually not much controversy, and I have accepted their conclusions without setting out the reasons for them. Where it has been necessary for the understanding of the Text to refer to the particular occasion for the revelation of a particular verse, I have done so briefly, but have not allowed it to absorb a disproportionate amount of space. It will be found that every verse revealed for a particular occasion has also a general meaning. The particular occasion and the particular people concerned have passed away, but the general meaning and its application remain true for all time. What we are concerned about now, in the fourteenth century of the Hījra, is what guidance can we draw for ourselves from the message of God?

I spoke of the general meaning of the verses. Every earnest and reverent student of the Qur-ān, as he proceeds with his study, will find, with an inward joy difficult to describe, how this general meaning also enlarges as his own capacity for understanding increases. It is like a traveller climbing a mountain: the higher he goes, the farther he sees. From a literary point of view the poet Keats has described his feeling when he discovered Chapman's Homer —

Then felt I like some watcher of the skies  
When a new planet swims into his ken,  
Or like stout Cortez when with eagle eyes  
He stared at the Pacific,—and all his men  
Looked at each other with a wild surmise,—  
Silent, upon a peak in Darien

How much greater is the joy and sense of wonder and miracle when the Qur-ān opens our spiritual eyes! The meaning which we thought we had grasped expands. New worlds are opened out. As we progress, still newer, and again newer

worlds "swim into our ken" The miracle deepens and deepens, and almost completely absorbs us And yet we know that the "face of God"—our final goal—has not yet been reached We are in the *mulh* of Sulaimān (Q 11 102), which the evil ones denied, belied, and even turned into blasphemy But we can ignore blasphemy, ridicule and contempt, for we are on the threshold of Realities, and a little perfume from the garden of the Holy One has already gladdened our nostrils

Such meaning it is most difficult to express But where I can, I have indicated it in the Notes, in the Commentary, and with the help of the rhythm and the elevated language of the Text

The Arabic Text I have had printed from photographic blocks made for me by Master Muhammad Sharif The calligraphy is from the pen of Pir 'Abdul Hamid, with whom I have been in touch and who has complied with my desire for a bold round hand, with the words clearly separated, the vowel points accurately placed over or under the letters to which they relate, and the verses duly numbered and placed in juxtaposition with their English equivalents Calligraphy occupies an important place in Muslim Art, and it is my desire that my version should not in any way be deficient in this respect

I have been fortunate in securing the co operation of Professor Zafar Iqbāl in looking over the proofs of the Arabic Text In connection with the Anjuman's edition of the Arabic Qur ān he has devoted much time and thought to the correct punctuation of the Text, and he has also investigated its history and problems I hope he will some day publish these valuable notes I have been privileged to see the Anjuman's Text before its formal publication I consider it the most carefully prepared Text of any produced in India, and I have generally followed it in punctuation and the numbering of verses,—the only points on which any difficulties are likely to arise on the Quranic Text

It has been my desire to have the printing done in the best style possible, with new type, on good glazed paper, and with the best ink procurable I hope the result will please those who are good enough to approve of the more essential features of the work The proprietors of the Ripon Press and all their staff, but especially Mr Badruddin Badr, their Proof Examiner, have taken a keen interest in their work The somewhat unusual demands made on their time and attention they have met cheerfully, and I am obliged to them The publisher, Shaikh Muhammad Ashraf, has thrown himself heart and soul into his work, and I hope the public will appreciate his efforts

My plan is to issue each *Sipāra* as it is ready, at intervals of not more than three months As the work proceeds, I hope it will be possible to accelerate the pace The paging will be continuous in the subsequent volumes The final binding will be in either three or two volumes It is my intention to provide a complete analytical Index to the whole I hope all interested will sign the publisher's subscription order in advance

One final word to my readers Read, study, and digest the Holy Book Read slowly, and let it sink into your heart and soul Such study will, like virtue, be its own reward If you find anything in this volume to criticise, please let it not spoil your enjoyment of the rest If you write to me, quoting chapter and verse, I shall be glad to consider your criticism, but let it not vex you if I exercise my own judgment in deciding for myself Any corrections accepted will be gratefully acknowledged On the other hand, if there is something that specially pleases you or helps you, please do not hesitate to write to me I have given up other interests to help you It will be a pleasure to know that my labour has not been in vain If you address me care of my Publisher at his Lahore address, he will always forward the letters to me

LAHORE

4th April 1934

=18th of the month  
of Pilgrimage, 1352 H,

A YŪSUF 'ALĪ,

## PREFACE TO THIRD EDITION, 1938

BESIDES the names which I mentioned in my Preface of 1934, of those who have assisted me in various ways, I have much pleasure in adding a few more at this stage. Khān Sāhib Khwāja Latīf Ahmad, of the Central Provinces Educational Service, has been a diligent and critical reader of the Parts as issued, and his friendly correspondence has enabled me to correct misprints and elucidate some points. Mr Fadhī Muhammad Khān, I F S, of Lahore, as well as Mian Muhammad 'Abdullāh, B A, LL B, of Lahore, have also been helpful in pointing out misprints. Maulvi Muhammad Shafī', Principal of the Oriental College, Lahore, has been good enough to answer most readily my queries on questions of scholarship referred to him. To these and other gentlemen, who have favoured me with correspondence, I have much pleasure in expressing my obligation.

The zeal and energy which my publisher, Shaikh Muhammad Ashraf, has thrown into the work, require renewed acknowledgement. For four years he and I have co-operated in a great undertaking, and all processes connected with it have been carried out by loving Muslim hands.

Since I last greeted my readers collectively I have been able to perform the Pilgrimage to the holy city of Mecca and the sacred territory around it and seen with my own eyes the city and territory of Medina, with all the country around and between the holy Cities. I have realised for myself the scenes in which the revelations came which I have humbly sought to interpret. I hope that some glimpses of this experience will have been conveyed to my dear readers. Will they pray that God may give me strength to complete this work and to serve Islam in other ways?

A YŪSUF 'ALĪ





## COMMENTARIES ON THE QUR'ĀN

Quranic literature is so voluminous that no single man can compass a perusal of the whole. Besides the extant works there were innumerable works written for special groups of people or from special points of view or for special purposes, which have perished. And more works are being added every day. The activity in this line has never been greater than it is now.

There is no Book in the world in whose service so much talent, so much labour, so much time and money have been expended as has been the case with the Qur'ān. A mere glance at Imām Suyūṭī's (d 911 H) *Itqān* or Hajī Khalīfa's (d 1059 H) *Kashf uz-zunūn* will show the encyclopædic volume of the Quranic sciences in their day.

Since then the volume has continued to go on increasing, although it must be admitted that the quality of the later literature on the subject leaves much to be desired. With the retrogression of the Islamic nations in original work in science, art, and philosophy, and the concomitant limitation in their outlook and experience in various phases of intellectual and spiritual life, has come a certain limitation in the free spirit of research and enquiry. The new Renaissance of Islam which is just beginning will, it is hoped, sweep away cobwebs and let in the full light of reason and understanding.

The need for an explanation of the verses of the Qur'ān arose quite early. Even before the whole of the Qur'ān was revealed, people used to ask the Apostle all sorts of questions as to the meaning of certain words in the verses revealed, or of their bearing on problems as they arose, or details of certain historical or spiritual matters on which they sought more light. The Apostle's answers were carefully stored in the memory of the Companions (*as ḥāb*) and were afterwards written down. In the next generation, the *Tābi'īn*, were those who had not personally conversed with the Apostle, like the Companions, but had conversed with the Companions, and learned from them. Subsequent generations always went back to establish a chain of evidence through the *Tābi'īn* and the Companions. Through them grew up the science of *Hadīth* or Traditions. As this literature grew, it became necessary to establish strict rules by which the evidence could be examined and tested, so as to separate that which was considered to be established from that which was doubtful or weak, and that which was to be rejected as unproved. In the evolution of the science of *Hadīth*, it became clear that even among the Companions certain persons had better memories than others, or better opportunities of becoming really acquainted with the Apostle's true meaning, or in other ways, a better title to be called true expositors, and the number of such persons came to be limited to ten only. Similarly the claims of the *Tābi'īn* came to be examined and graded, and so on. Thus arose a new science, in which the names and positions of persons in *Hadīth* literature were examined biographically and in other ways.

The *Hadīth* literature dealt with all sorts of matters, including Theology, Ethics, and Exegesis (explanation of the Qur'ān). Exegesis soon became an independent science by itself and was called *Tafsīr*, and the sphere of *Tafsīr* itself began to widen as the experience and knowledge of the Arabs and Arabic writers began to increase. Besides the examination of correct traditions from various kinds and grades of authorities, it began to examine the meaning of words philologically, collecting a vast amount of learning as to root meanings, the usage of the Quraish tribe of Arabs, to which the Apostle belonged, the usage and meaning of words in the purest original Arabic before it became mixed up with foreign idioms and usages by the use of the Arabic language by non-Arabs in Islam, and by the influence of the enormous geographical expansion of the Arab race in the first few centuries of Islam. The increasing knowledge of history and of Jewish and Christian legends enabled

the Commentators to illustrate the Text of the Holy Book with reference to these. Sometimes the amount of Jewish stuff (some of it absurd), which found its way into the Commentaries, was out of all proportion to its importance and relevance, and gave rise to the legend, which has been exploited by polemical Christian and Jewish writers, that Islam was built up on an imperfect knowledge of Christianity and Judaism, or that it accepts as true the illustrative legends from the Talmud or the Midrash or various fantastic schools of Christianity. Then came philosophy and the mystic doctrine of the *Sūfī* schools. The development of the science of *kalām* (built on formal logic), and its further offshoot the *'Ilm-ul 'Aqā'id* (the philosophical exposition of the grounds of our belief) introduced further elements on the intellectual side, while *Tāawīl* (esoteric exposition of the hidden or inner meaning) introduced elements on the spiritual side, based on a sort of transcendental intuition of the expositor. The *Sūfī* mystics at least adhered to the rules of their own Orders, which were very strict. But many of the non *Sūfī* writers on *Tāawīl* indulged in an amount of licence in interpretation which has rightly called forth a protest on the part of the more sober 'Ulamā.

For my part I agree with this protest. While freely reserving the right of individual judgment on the part of every earnest writer, I think the art of interpretation must stick as closely as possible to the text which it seeks to interpret. Every serious writer and thinker has a right to use all the knowledge and experience he possesses in the service of the Qur'ān. But he must not mix up his own theories and conclusions, however reasonable, with the interpretation of the Text itself, which is usually perfectly perspicuous, as it claims it to be. Our difficulties in interpretation often arise from various causes, of which I will mention just a few.

(1) Arabic words in the Text have acquired other meanings than those which were understood by the Apostle and his Companions. All living languages undergo such transformations. The early Commentators and Philologists went into these matters with a very comprehensive grasp, and we must accept their conclusions. Where they are not unanimous, we must use our judgment and historic sense in adopting the interpretation of that authority which appeals to us most. We must not devise new verbal meanings.

(2) Even since the early Commentators wrote, the Arabic language has further developed, and later Commentators often abandon the interpretations of earlier Commentators without sufficient reason. In exercising our selective judgment in such cases it would be a good rule to prefer the earlier to the later interpretation, though, where a later writer has reviewed the earlier interpretations and given good reasons for his own view, he has an advantage which we must freely concede to him.

(3) Classical Arabic has a vocabulary in which the meaning of each root word is so comprehensive that it is difficult to interpret it in a modern analytical language word for word, or by the use of the same word in all places where the original word occurs in the Text. A striking example is furnished by the word *Sabr*, about which see my notes on 11 45 and 11 153. Even though one particular shade of meaning may be predominant in any particular passage, the others are latent. So in a ray of light, when a prism analyses it, we may look at a portion of the field where a particular colour predominates, but other colours do not escape our glance. An Arabic word is often a full ray of light, when a translator looks at it through the prism of a modern analytical language, he misses a great deal of its meaning by confining his attention to one particular colour. European translators have often failed in this respect and sometimes even been landed in absurdities because these delicate rich tones are not studied in their languages or literatures, and they do not look for them or appreciate them in the best examples of Oriental style. If they despise them or think them fantastic, they had best leave the interpretation of Oriental literatures alone. This is all the more so in religious or spiritual literature. No human language can possibly be adequate for the expression of the highest spiritual thought. Such thought must be expressed symbolically in terse and comprehensive words, out of which people will

perceive just as much light and colour as their spiritual eyes are capable of perceiving. It is possible that their prism will only show them a dark blue while a whole glorious symphony of colours is hidden from their eyes. And so it comes about that through the prism of a clever English translation, poor 'Umar (Omar) *Khayyām* emerges as a sensualist and cynic who sees no higher purpose in life than drinking wine, dallying with women, and holding up his hands in despair at "this sorry scheme of things entire." And so the parables of stern morality in the Qur'an, its mystic earnestness, and its pictures of future beatitude are distorted into idle fables, incoherent effusions, and a sensual paradise!

(4) An opposite error sometimes arises because in certain matters the rich vocabulary of the Qur-ān distinguishes between things and ideas of a certain kind by special words, for which there is only a general word in English. Instances are *Rahmān* and *Rahīm* (Most Merciful), see 11 1 n, '*afā*, *safaha*, *gafara* (to forgive), see 11 109 n, and the various words for Creation, see 11 117 n. The fact is that it gives us a very limited idea of God's Mercy, when we only use the English word "mercy." The Quranic idea implies not only pity and forgiveness but the Grace which protects us and keeps us from sin, and indeed guides us to the light of His "Countenance." So the "forgiveness" of God is a thing totally different in quality from the forgiveness which a man can give to his brother man. The equation implied in "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those that trespass against us" is a misleading fallacy. So, again, "Creation" is not just a simple process done by God at some remote time and finished with. The Quranic idea implies various processes and the continuous presence and activity of God in His Creation.

(5) God's purpose is eternal, and His plan is perfect, but man's intelligence is limited at its very best. In the same individual it grows and declines according to the strength of his powers and the width of his experience. If we take mankind collectively the variations are even greater from age to age and from people to people. There is thus no finality in human interpretation. And in the thing interpreted—God's Creation—there is constant flux and change. So that the impact of the one on the other must yield diverse results. The view of Kunchinjunga must vary infinitely according to the position of the observer, even if Kunchinjunga remained the same. But if Kunchinjunga itself varies, there is a double cause of variation in the view. So I believe in progressive interpretation, in the need for understanding and explaining spiritual matters from different angles. The difficulties that confront me may not be the same as those that confront you. The problems which our age has to meet may not be the same as the problems which puzzled earnest minds of the fourth or sixth or later centuries of the Hīra. Therefore it is no merit to hug the solutions offered in the fourth or sixth centuries when our souls cry out in hunger for solace in the fourteenth century of the Hīra.

The distinction drawn by Commentators between matters of report (*manqūlāt*) and matters of judgment (*ma'qūlāt*) is a sound one, and I heartily accept it. But I would extend the scope of the *ma'qūlāt* far beyond questions of idiom and meaning. In the former the issues are what actually happened, or what was actually said, or how were certain things done? Here the closer we go back to contemporary authority, the better. In the latter, the issues are what is the bearing of this truth on our lives, or what illustration helps us best to grasp this, or what is the wisdom we can extract from this? In such matters, the closer we come to our own circumstances and experiences, the better. It is not only our right but our duty to seek honestly our own solutions, and while we respect authority, we must not neglect or despise the gifts which God has accumulated for us through the ages.

The principles on which I have worked may be briefly stated. In matters of philology and language I accept the best authority among those who were competent to deal with these questions. The older the better. In matters of narration, contemporary authorities are best, subject to such corrections as have to be applied for their points of view. As to the particular occasions on which particular verses

were revealed, the information is interesting and valuable from a historical point of view, and our older writers have collected ample material for it. But to lay too much stress on it to day puts the picture out of all perspective. The Qur-ān was not revealed for a particular occasion only, but for all time. The particular occasion is now past. Our chief interest now is to see how it can guide us in our present lives. Its meaning is so manifold, and when tested, it is so true, that we should be wise to concentrate on the matters that immediately help us. So in nature plants seek out of the soil just that food which gives them nourishment. There is plenty of other food left in the soil, which other plants take, which can digest it. In matters of remote history or folk lore, we must take the results of the latest researches. In interpreting Jewish or Christian legends or beliefs we must go to Jewish or Christian sources, but by way of illustration only, not in the direction of incorporating such beliefs or systems. Though they were true in their original purity, we are not sure of the form which they subsequently took, and in any case the fuller light of the sun obscures the lesser light of the stars.

In the application of spiritual truths to our own times and our own lives, we must use every kind of knowledge, science, and experience which we possess, but we must not obtrude irrelevant matter into our discussions. Let us take simple examples. When we speak of the rising of sun in the east, we do not go on to reconcile the expression with the Copernican system of astronomy. What we mean is as true under the Copernican system as it was under the Ptolemæic system. When we speak of the endless plains of India, we are not put on our defence because the earth is round. Nor will such poetic expressions as the seven firmaments raise questions as to the nature of space in modern astronomy. Man's intellect is given to him to investigate the nature of the physical world around him. He forms different conceptions of it at different times. Spiritual truths are quite independent of the question which of these conceptions are true. They deal with matters which are beyond the ken of physical science. In explaining or illustrating them we shall use such language as is current among the people to whom we speak.

Let me set out the names of the most important *Tafsirs*, especially those to which I have from time to time referred. They are not, however, in any sense my authorities. They belong to widely different schools of thought, and some of them express extreme views with which I do not agree. I only adopt the general sense of accepted Commentaries.

(1) The monumental work of Abū Ja'far Muhammad Ibn Jarīr *Tabarī*, d 310 H. A perfect mine of historical information, as the author was both a historian and a Traditionist. Copies are not easily accessible.

(2) The *Mufradāt*, a dictionary of difficult words and phrases in the Qur-ān, by Abul Qāsim Husain Rāgib, of Ispahān, d 503 H. Also explains allusions.

(3) The *Kashshāf*, by Abul Qāsim Mahmūd *Zamakhsharī*, of Khwārizm, d 538 H. Very full in the explanation of words and idioms, takes a decidedly rational and ethical view of doctrine. Numerous Commentaries have been written on this Commentary.

(4) *Tafsīr Kabīr*, by Fakhr ud dīn Muhammad *Rāzī*, d 606 H. Very comprehensive. Strong in interpretations from a Sūfī or spiritual point of view.

(5) *Anwār-ut Tanzīl*, by Qādhī Nasīr-ud dīn Abū Sa'īd *Baidhāwī*, d 685 H. Has drawn largely from the *Mufradāt*, the *Kashshāf*, and the *Tafsīr Kabīr*, but incorporates a good deal of original matter. A very popular Commentary, on which again numerous Commentaries have been written.

(6) The *Tafsīr* of Abul Fidā Ismā'il Ibn Kathīr, d 774 H. Voluminous, but has great authority among the 'Ulamā.

(7) *Iqān fi 'ulūm il Qur-ān*, by Jalāl ud dīn Suyūṭī, d 911 H. A comprehensive review of the sciences of the Qur-ān, being an introduction to his *Majma' ul-Bahrain*.

(8) *Tafsīr Jalālīn* — Written by the two Jalāl ud dīns, one of whom was the author of the *Iṭqān*, mentioned above, d 911 H. A concise and meritorious Commentary, on which again a number of Commentaries have been written.

(9) Our country has produced some notable scholars in the realm of *Tafsīr*. They wrote in Arabic and Persian, and the latter ones have written in Urdu.

The earliest I can trace is Shaikh 'Alī Ibn Ahmad Mahāmī (of Māhim, near Bombay), d 835 H = 1432 A D, author of the *Tafsīr Rahmānī*. Almost contemporary with him was 'Allāma Shams ud-dīn, of Daulatabād and Delhi, who lived during the brilliant reign of Ibrāhīm Sharqī of Jaunpur (1400—1440 A D). He wrote in Persian. During the nineteenth century, the famous Muhaddith of Delhi, Shāh Walī ullaḥ, and his two sons Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz (d 1824) and Shāh 'Abdul Qādir (d 1826) wrote both translations and Commentaries. Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz wrote in Persian and Shāh 'Abdul Qādir in Urdu. The Urdu Commentary of Sīr Sayyid Ahmad Khān of 'Aligarh (d 1898) has not met the approval of the 'Ulamā. On the other hand the more recent Urdu Commentary of Maulvī 'Abdul Haqq, the *Tafsīr Haqqānī*, has passed through several editions, is quite modern in tone and manageable in bulk, and is widely circulated in India. I have derived much instruction from it and have used it constantly. The Commentary of Maulvī Abul Kalām Āzād has been planned on a spacious scale and has not yet been finished.

(10) The Modernist school in Egypt got a wise lead from the late Shaikh Muhammad 'Abduh (d 1323 H = 1905 A D), whose unfinished Commentary is being completed by Muhammad Rashīd Ridhā, the talented editor of the *Manār* newspaper. The work of Shaikh Tantāwī Jauharī, a pupil of 'Abduh, finds the "jewels" of the Qur'ān and of the sciences mutually illuminative, and suggests many new lines of thought. 'Allāma Farīd Wajdī is also spoken of as a good modern Commentator. I have not yet been able to get a copy of his work.

(11) It has been said that the Qur'ān is its own best Commentary. As we proceed with the study of the Book, we find how true this is. A careful comparison and collation of passages from the Qur'ān removes many difficulties. Use a good Concordance, such as the one I have named among the Works of Reference, and you will find that one passage throws light on another.

## TRANSLATIONS OF THE QUR-ĀN

Almost all languages spoken by Muslims have translations of the Qur-ān in them. Usually the Text is printed with the Translation. If the language is undeveloped, many of the Arabic words of the Qur-ān are taken over bodily into it for want of corresponding words in the language. Even in cultivated languages like Persian or Turkish, the introduction of religious terms from Arabic gave a body of words which were common to the whole Islamic world, and thus cemented that unity of the Muslim Brotherhood which is typified by the Qibla. Where the notion itself is new to the speakers of polished languages, they are glad to borrow the Arabic word expressing that notion and all the associations connected with it. Such a word is *Qibla*. Where the language is undeveloped, the translation is nothing more than a rough explanation of the Arabic Text. The translation has neither grammatical finish nor a form which can stand independently by itself. That is what happened with the earlier Urdu translations. They were really rough explanations. The ambition of every learned Muslim is to read the Qur-ān in Arabic. The ambition of every Muslim is to read the *sounds* of the Arabic Text. I wish that his or her ambition were also to *understand* the Qur-ān, either in Arabic or in the mother tongue or some well developed tongue which he or she understands. Hence the need for good and accurate translations.

The translations into non-European languages known to me are Persian, Turkish, Urdu, Tamil (used by Moplas), Pashto (for Afghans), Bengali, Malay, some of the languages of the Eastern Archipelago, and some of the African languages. I believe there is also a Chinese (dialectical) translation.

The earliest Urdu translation was by Shāh 'Abdul Qādir of Delhi (d 1826). He has already been mentioned among the Indian Commentators. Since then numerous Urdu translations have followed, some of which have been left incomplete. Among the complete ones, much used at the present day, may be mentioned those of Shāh Rafī' ud dīn of Delhi, Shāh Ashraf 'Alī Thānawī, and Maulvī Nazīr Ahmad (d 1912). Personally I prefer the last. The projected Urdu translation by Hakīm Ahmad Shujā' has not yet been published.

Before the development of the modern European vernaculars, the cultivated language of Europe was Latin. A Latin translation was made for the Monastery of Clugny about 1143 (in the sixth century of the Hijra) but not published till 1543. The place of publication was Basle and the publisher Bibliander. This was translated into Italian, German, and Dutch. Schweigger's German translation was published at Nuremberg (Bavaria) in 1616. A French translation by Du Ryer was published at Paris in 1647, and a Russian one at St Petersburg in 1776. Savary's French translation appeared in 1783, and Kasimírski's French translation (which has passed through several editions) first appeared in 1840, the French interest in Islam having been stimulated by French conquests in Algeria and North Africa. The Germans have followed up Schweigger with Boysen's translation in 1773, Wahl's in 1828, and Ullmann's (first edition in 1840). I believe the Ahmadiya Association of Lahore have in hand a fresh translation into German and Dutch.

Meanwhile Maracci had produced in 1689 a Latin version of the Qur-ān with the Arabic Text and quotations from various Arabic Commentaries, carefully selected and garbled, so as to give the worst possible impression of Islam to Europe. Maracci was a learned man, and there is no pretence about the object he had in view, *viz*, to discredit Islam by an elaborate show of quotations from Muslim authorities themselves. Maracci was himself a Confessor to Pope Innocent XI, his work is dedicated to the holy Roman Emperor Leopold I, and he introduces it by an introductory volume containing what he calls a "Refutation of the Qur-ān".

The first English translation by A. Ross was but a translation of the first French translation of Du Ryer of 1647, and was published a few years after Du Ryer's. George Sale's translation (1734) was based on Maracci's Latin version, and even his notes and his Preliminary Discourse are based mainly on Maracci. Considering that Maracci's object was to discredit Islam in the eyes of Europe, it is remarkable that Sale's translation should be looked upon as a standard translation in the English speaking world, and should pass through edition after edition, being even included in the series called the



Chandos Classics and receiving the benediction of Sir E. Denison Ross. The Rev J. M. Rodwell arranged the Sūras in a rough chronological order. His translation was first published in 1861. Though he tries to render the idiom fairly, his notes show the mind of a Christian clergyman, who was more concerned to "show up" the Book than to appreciate or expound its beauties. Prof. E. H. Palmer's translation (first published in 1876) suffers from the idea that the Qur-ān ought to be translated into colloquial language. He failed to realise the beauty and grandeur of style in the original Arabic. To him that style was "rude and rugged" we may more justifiably call his translation careless and slipshod.

The amount of mischief done by these versions of non-Muslim and anti-Muslim writers has led Muslim writers to venture into the field of English translation. The first Muslim to undertake an English translation was Dr. Muhammad 'Abdul Ḥakīm Khān, of Patiala, 1905. Mirza Hairat of Delhi also published a translation, (Delhi 1909) the Commentary which he intended to publish in a separate volume of Introduction was, as far as I know, never published. My dear friend, the late Nawwāb 'Imād ul Mulk, Sa'iyid Husain Bilgramī, of Hyderabad, Deccan, translated a portion, but he did not live to complete his work. The Ahmadiya Sect has also been active in the field. Its Qādiyān Anjuman published a version of the first Sīpāra in 1915. Apparently no more was published. Its Lahore Anjuman has published Maulvī Muhammad 'Alī's translation (first edition in 1917), which has passed through more than one edition. It is a scholarly work, and is equipped with adequate explanatory matter in the notes and the Preface, and a fairly full Index. But the English of the Text is decidedly weak, and is not likely to appeal to those who know no Arabic. There are two other Muslim translations of great merit. But they have been published without the Arabic Text. Ḥafīz Gulām Sarwar's translation (published in 1930 or 1929) deserves to be better known than it is. He has provided fairly full summaries of the Sūras, section by section, but he has practically no notes to his Text. I think such notes are necessary for a full understanding of the Text. In many cases the Arabic words and phrases are so pregnant of meaning that a Translator would be in despair unless he were allowed to explain all that he understands by them. Mr. Marmaduke Pickthall's translation was published in 1930. He is an English Muslim, a literary man of standing, and an Arabic scholar. But he has added very few notes to elucidate the Text. His rendering is "almost literal" it can hardly be expected that it can give an adequate idea of a Book which (in his own words) can be described as "that inimitable symphony the very sounds of which move men to tears and ecstasy." Perhaps the attempt to catch something of that symphony in another language is impossible. Greatly daring, I have made that attempt. We do not blame an artist who tries to catch in his picture something of the glorious light of a spring landscape.

The English language being widely spread over the world, many people interested in Islam will get their ideas of the Qur'ān from English translations. It is good that qualified Muslims should make the attempt to present the picture which their own mental and spiritual vision presents to themselves. The Indian educational system has enthroned English as the common language of culture for a population of 350 millions. The most educated of its 80 millions of Muslims—unless they know Arabic—look to English as the most cultivated medium of expression. Their non-Muslim fellow countrymen judge—usually misjudge—their religion by the material which is available to them in English. We should improve and increase this material as much as we can and from as many points of view as we can. Some Muslim nations—like the Turks—have now determined to provide their religious literature (including the Holy Book) in their own national language. In order to keep them in touch with the thought and points of view of their brethren in faith, the English language would under present conditions be the most convenient medium. These are the considerations which have moved me to undertake the stupendous task of providing an English Interpretation of the Qur-ān. I pray for strength and light, so that I may be enabled to succeed in this service to Islam.



## USEFUL WORKS OF REFERENCE

The wide compass of the Qur ān makes it necessary to consult works of reference on almost every conceivable subject, to enable us to elucidate the various points that arise. To deal adequately with such a Book, the widest reading is necessary as well as the most varied experience in life. But the interests of readers require that a handy Commentary should not roam too far afield. Bearing this in view the three essential kinds of books would be (a) Previous Commentaries, (b) previous Translations, (c) Dictionaries and General Works of Reference, easily accessible. I have set out (a) and (b) in the previous two Notes. I note a few under (c) —

1. Imām Abul Qāsim Husain Ragīb's *Mufradat* a concise Arabic dictionary of words and phrases in the Qur ān. Already mentioned under Commentaries.
2. The well known Arabic Dictionary, *Qāmūs*
3. The well known Arabic Dictionary, *Lisān-ul 'Arab*
4. The concise Arabic Persian Dictionary, *Surāh*
5. J. Pentrice's *Dictionary & Glossary of the Koran*
6. E. W. Lane *English Arabic Lexicon*
7. Imām Jalāl ud dīn Suyūṭī's *Itqān fī 'ulūm al Qur ān* a veritable encyclopædia of Quranic sciences
8. Noldeke und Schwally *Geschichte des Qorans*. A German Essay on the Chronology of the Qur ān. Its criticisms and conclusions are from a non Muslim point of view and to us not always acceptable, though it is practically the last word of European scholarship on the subject.
9. *Encyclopædia of Islam*. Nearly completed. Very unequal in its various parts.
10. *Encyclopædia Britannica* 14th edition. A great advance on previous editions, as regards the attention it devotes to Arabic learning.
11. Hughes's *Dictionary of Islam*. Out of date, but still useful.
12. Ibn Hishām *Sīrat ur Rasūl*. A fairly detailed Life of the Apostle.
13. Maulvī Shiblī Nu'mānī (d 1914=1334 H) *Sīrat un Nabī* (An Urdu Life of the Apostle)
14. *Fath ur Rahmān*, an Arabic Concordance to the Qur ān, by Faḍḥ ullaḥ Bīk Ḥasānī, printed in Cairo in 1346 H. Full and well arranged, and easy to use.

## TRANSLITERATION OF ARABIC WORDS AND NAMES

The following table shows the system which I have followed in transliterating the letters of the Arabic alphabet —

ا	{ Consonantal }	a	ط	ʔ
ء	{ sound }		ظ	z
إ	Long vowel *	ā	ع	' (apostrophe)
ب		b	غ	g
ت		t	ف	f
ث		<u>th</u>	ق	q
ج		j	ك	k
ح		<u>kh</u>	م	m
د		d	ن	n
ذ		z	هـ	h
ر		r	و	consonant w
ز		z	و	long vowel* ū
س		s	و	diphthong au
ش		sh	ي	consonant y
ص		s	ي	long vowel* ī
ض		<u>dh</u>	ي	diphthong ai

Short vowels    َ (fatha)    a

ِ (dhamma)    u

1 For the *hamza* (ء) I have used no distinctive sign. An apostrophe for it and an inverted apostrophe for the 'asn (ع), or *vice versa*, is confusing to English readers. As a moved consonant, it is sufficiently shown in English by the long or short vowel which moves it, *e g*, *ab*, *Raūf*. Where it is a hiatus preceded by a *fatha*, I have shown it by a second *a* thus, *Iqraa*, the cave of *Hiraa*. In other cases it has not been possible to show it without using a distinctive sign. The name of the Holy Book is usually written *Qurān*, but I prefer to write *Qur-ān*.

2 The final *h* preceded by the short *a* is scarcely pronounced, and I have left it out. Hence *Sūra*, *Fātiha*, *Hijra*, etc., where the Arabic spelling would require *Sūrah*, *Fātihah*, *Hijrah*, etc.

3 In internationalised words and names I have used the spelling ordinarily current in English, *e g*, *Mecca*, *Medina*, *Maulvi*, *Urdu*, *Islam*, *Israel*, *Abraham*, *Jacob*. Here the boundary is thin and rather ill defined, and possibly my practice and that of my proof-readers have not been absolutely uniform.

4 Some names, *e g*, *Ishmael*, *Hagar*, etc., have acquired a contemptuous association in their European forms, while the persons they represent are sacred personages held in great honour in Islam. I have, therefore, avoided the European forms and used the Arabic forms, *Isma'il*, *Hājar*, etc.

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\* Where it is really pronounced long. Hence *khalaqnā-kum* but *khalaqnal insān*, *Abū Sufyān* but *Abul Qāsim*, *fin-nār* but *fi hi*.

## ABBREVIATIONS USED

I have not used many abbreviations Those I have used are shown below —

A D	= Anno Domini = year of the Christian Calendar
A H	= Anno Hegiræ = year of the Hījra
Bk	= Book
C	= The running Commentary, in rhythmic prose
Cf	= compare
d	= date of death of an author (to show the age in which he lived)
Deut	= The Book of Deuteronomy in the Old Testament
E B	= <i>Encyclopædia Britannica</i> , 14th edition
e g	= <i>exempli gratia</i> = for example
Exod	= The Book of Exodus, Old Testament
Gen	= The Book of Genesis, Old Testament
H	= year of the Hījra
H G S	= Ḥāfiẓ Gulam Sarwar's Translation of the Qur ān
i e	= <i>id est</i> = that is
Josh	= Book of Joshua, Old Testament
Matt	= Gospel of St Matthew, New Testament
M M A	= Maulvi Muhammad 'Alī's Translation of the Qur-ān
M P	= Mr M Pickthall's <i>The Meaning of the Glorious Koran</i>
n	= note
nn	= notes
Num	= The Book of Numbers, Old Testament
p	= page
pp	= pages
Q	= Qur ān
xx 25	= Qur ān, Sūra 20, verse 25
Rev	= Revelation of St John, New Testament
S	= sūra
v	= verse
vv	= verses
viz	= <i>videlicet</i> = namely
٣٠, ٣٠, etc	= the end of one Sīpāra, two Sīpāras, etc      A Sīpāra is arithmetically the 30th part of the Qur ān

## PUNCTUATION MARKS IN THE ARABIC TEXT

The punctuation marks in the Arabic Text have been worked out by our 'Ulama with great care and minute attention to details. The earliest manuscripts had few or no punctuation marks. Their growth and development furnish an interesting history, on which I hope Professor Zafar Iqbal, who has gone into the question, will publish his notes. In classical Europe, Greek had practically no punctuation marks. Later Latin had one or two rudimentary ones. In modern Europe they developed with printing. Aldus Manutius (16th century) was the first to work out a regular system. The Muslims were much earlier in the field for Quranic purposes, although in current Urdu, Persian, or Arabic, punctuation is not a strong point.

Quranic punctuation is an elaborate system, in which three kinds of marks are used. First, there are marks to show the variations in the systems of Qirāat. The most important of these is what is known as the Mu'ānaqa معانق. This literally means the action of two persons embracing each other shoulder to shoulder, as in the ceremonious salute at the celebration of 'Id. The technical meaning in connection with the Quranic text is that a certain word or expression so marked can be construed as going either with the words or expressions preceding it or with those following it. The word or expression in question is indicated by three dots placed before and after it, above other punctuation marks if any. An example will be found in 11:2, where the word *fī hi* may be construed either as referring to the word *raib* in the preceding clause, or to the word *hudan* in the succeeding clause. Either or both constructions are admissible. Passages where such constructions occur are indicated in the margin of the Arabic Text by the abbreviation مع, where this was worked out by the earlier Commentators (*Mutaqaddimīn*), or by the word معانق in full, where it was worked out by the later Commentators (*Mutaakhirīn*). The numeral above it shows the serial number of the Mu'ānaqa of each series.

Secondly, there are marginal marks showing division into sections or paragraphs. These are denoted by the letter 'am (ع) in the margin, and are explained under the heading "Divisions of the Qur-ān."

Thirdly, there are the ordinary punctuation marks in the Text. A knowledge of the most important of these is necessary for an intelligent reading of the Text. Most important of all is a big circle ○ to denote the end of one Āyat and the beginning of another. If the end of the Āyat is not also the end of a sentence, the mark of a smaller stop is put above it. Where one mark is put on the top of another, the former governs the latter. A warning not to stop is denoted by لا. The letter ٴ (tāsim) shows that a stop is absolutely necessary, otherwise the sense is spoilt. This is so important that it is also shown prominently in the margin as وقف لازم (jāz) ج shows that a stop is optional, but if you do not stop, the sense is not spoiled. There are other marks to show the extent to which a stop is permissible, e.g., for taking breath, etc., or where option is allowed, whether it is better to stop or not to stop. The letter ٴ (muṭlaq) denotes a full stop, i.e., the end of a sentence, but not the end of an argument, as in the case of a paragraph or section (ع).

## DIVISIONS OF THE QUR-ĀN

The reading of the Qur-ān is considered a pious duty by every Muslim and is actually performed in practice by every literate person, man, woman, and child. For the convenience of those who wish to complete the whole reading in a given time, the whole Text is divided into thirty equal parts, or seven equal parts. The thirtieth Part is called *juz-un* in Arabic, and *Sipāra* or simply *Pāra* in Persian and Urdu. If you read a *Sipāra* every day, you complete the whole reading in a month of thirty days. The seventh part is called a *Manzil*. If one is read every day, the whole is completed in a week. Usually the arithmetical quarters of a *Sipāra* (one-fourth, one half, three-quarters) are also marked in the Arabic copies as *Ar-rub'*, *An-nisf*, and *Ath-thalātha*.

According to subject matter, the division is different. The whole of the Qur-ān is arranged in 114 Sūras of very unequal size. The Sūras are numbered and the consecutive number is shown just before the title of the Sūra, both in Arabic and English. In Arabic, the figure just after the title shows the chronological order as usually accepted by Muslim writers. Each Sūra consists of a number of *Āyats*. Sūra I contains 7 *Āyats* and Sūra II contains 286. For the meaning of *Sūra* and *Āyat* see C 42 nn 15-17. The most convenient form of quotation is to name the Sūra and the *Āyat* thus 11 120 means the 120th *Āyat* of the second Sūra. A Sūra is usually spoken of as a Chapter in English, but that translation is hardly satisfactory. If you examine the order you will find that each Sūra is a step in a gradation. I have left the word untranslated, as a technical term in our religious literature. The *Āyat* or verse division is usually determined by the rhythm and cadence in the Arabic Text. Sometimes an *Āyat* contains many sentences. Sometimes a sentence is divided by a break in an *Āyat*. But usually there is a pause in meaning at the end of an *Āyat*.

A division of the Sūra into Sections is shown in all Arabic Texts. These are logical divisions according to meaning. The word translated "Section" is in Arabic *Rukū'*, a "bowing of the head". The end of a *Rukū'* is shown in Arabic by ر. Usually three figures are written with ع. The top figure shows the number of *Rukū's* completed in that Sūra. The middle figure shows the number of *Āyats* in the *Rukū'* just completed. The bottom figure shows the number of *Rukū's* completed in that *Sipāra*, irrespective of Sūras. For example, the first ع in Sipara II which continues Sūra II from Sipāra I is usually marked ع. It means that at that point 17 *Rukū's* of Sūra II have been completed, that the *Rukū'* of which it marks the close contains 6 *Āyats*, and that it is the first *Rukū'* that falls in Sipāra II. I have further marked the sub division of *Rukū's* into shorter paragraphs where necessary, by using in the English text a bold flowery Initial. e.g., see the initial

in 11 6 or the initial **W** in 11 35.



## INTRODUCTION

- C 1 —Glory to God Most High, full of Grace and Mercy ,  
He created All, including Man  
To Man He gave a special place in His Creation  
He honoured man to be His Agent,  
And to that end, endued him with understanding,  
Purified his affections, and gave him spiritual insight ,  
So that man should understand Nature,  
Understand himself,  
And know God through His wondrous Signs,  
And glorify Him in truth, reverence, and unity
- C 2 —For the fulfilment of this great trust  
Man was further given a Will,  
So that his acts should reflect God's universal Will and Law,  
And his mind, freely choosing,  
Should experience the sublime joy  
Of being in harmony with the Infinite,  
And with the great drama of the world around him,  
And with his own spiritual growth
- C 3 —But, created though he was in the best of moulds,  
Man fell from Unity when his Will was warped,  
And he chose the crooked path of Discord  
And sorrow and pain, selfishness and degradation,  
Ignorance and hatred, despair and unbelief  
Poisoned his life, and he saw shapes of evil  
In the physical, moral, and spiritual world,  
And in himself
- C 4 —Then did his soul rise against himself,  
And his self discord made discord between kith and kin  
Men began to fear the strong and oppress the weak,  
To boast in prosperity, and curse in adversity,  
And to flee each other, pursuing phantoms,  
For the truth and reality of Unity  
Was gone from their minds
- C 5 —When men spread themselves over the earth,  
And became many nations,  
Speaking diverse languages,  
And observing diverse customs and laws ,

The evils became multiplied,  
 As one race or nation  
 Became alienated from another  
 The Brotherhood of Man was now doubly forgotten,—  
 First, between individuals, and secondly, between nations  
 Arrogance, selfishness, and untruth  
 Were sown and reaped in larger fields ,  
 And Peace, Faith, Love and Justice  
 Were obscured over masses of men,  
 As large tracts of land are starved  
 Of sunshine by clouds floating far on high

C 6 —But God in His infinite mercy and love,  
 Who forgives and guides individuals and nations,  
 And turns to good even what seems to us evil,  
 Never forsakes the struggling soul that turns to Him,  
 Nor the groups of men and women  
 Who join together to obey His Will and Law  
 And strengthen each other in unity and truth,  
 Nor the Nations that dwell  
 In mountain or valley, heat or cold,  
 In regions fertile or arid,  
 In societies that roam over land or seas,  
 Or hunt, or tend flocks, or till the soil,  
 Or seek the seas for food or oil or fat or gems,  
 Or dig out from the bowels of the earth  
 Precious stones or metals or stored up heat and energy,  
 Or practise arts and crafts, or produce abundant wealth  
 By machines of ingenious workmanship,  
 Or live a frugal life of contemplation  
 For all are children of One God,  
 And share His loving care  
 And must be brought within the pale  
 Of His eternal unity and harmony

C.7 —And so this light of eternal Unity  
 Has shone in all ages and among all nations,  
 Through chosen Apostles of God, who came  
 As men to dwell among men,  
 To share their joys and sorrows,  
 To suffer for them and with them,—  
 Aye, and to suffer more than falls  
 To ordinary mortal lot,—  
 That so their message and their life

Might fulfil the eternal  
And unchanging purpose of the Most High,—  
To lead man to his noblest destiny

C 8 —Ever this eternal light of Unity,  
This mystic light of God's own Will,  
Has shone and shines with undiminished splendour  
The names of many Messengers are inscribed  
In the records of many nations and many tongues,  
And many were the forms in which their message was delivered,  
According to the needs of the times and the understanding of the people,  
And manifold were the lives of the Messengers,  
And manifold also was the response of their people,  
But they all witnessed to the One Truth  
Of God's unity, might, grace and love

C 9 —As the records of man are imperfect,  
And the memory of man unstable  
The names of many of these messengers  
Are known in one place and not in another,  
Or among one people and not among others,  
And some of their names may have perished utterly,  
But their message stands one and indivisible,  
Even though it may have been forgotten,  
Or twisted by ignorance, error, superstition or perversity,  
Or misunderstood in the blinding light  
Of time or tortuous Circumstance

C 10 —Many were the faiths in the composite world  
Of Western Asia, Northern Africa, and Europe,  
And many were the fragments of ancient wisdom,  
Saved, transformed, renewed, or mingled,  
And many new streams of wisdom were poured through the crucibles  
Of noble minds,—prophets, poets, preachers,  
Philosophers, and thinking men of action,  
And many were the conflicts, and many  
The noble attempts reaching out towards Unity,  
And many were the subtle influences  
Interchanged with the other worlds  
Of further and Eastern Asia,—  
Aye, and perchance with the scattered Isles  
Of the Pacific and the world between  
The Atlantic and the Pacific

C. 11 —At length came the time when the Voice of Unity



Should speak and declare to the People,  
 Without the need of Priests or Priest-craft,  
 Without miracles save those that happen  
 Now and always in the spiritual world,  
 Without mystery, save those mysteries  
 Which unfold themselves in the growing  
 Inner experience of man and his vision of God,—  
 To declare with unfaltering voice  
 The Unity of God, the Brotherhood of Man,  
 And Grace and Mercy, Bounty and Love,  
 Poured out in unstinted measure for ever and ever

- C 12 — And this great healing light shone  
 Among a people steeped in ignorance,  
 Brave and free, but without cohesion or union,  
 Simple and rude, but with an easy familiarity with Nature,  
 Accustomed to Nature's hardships and her rugged resistance to man,  
 But dreaming of the delights of gardens and fruitful fields,  
 Cruel, yet with a rough sense of equality,  
 And wielding a tongue, flexible, beautiful,  
 And able to respond, with brevity and eloquence,  
 To the sublimest thoughts which man could conceive
- C 13 — Who were fit to be vehicles of this light ?—  
 Not men intoxicated with words and mysteries,  
 Men whom politics had debauched or tyranny had subdued,  
 Men whose refinement had ended in vices,  
 Who saw Nature only through books or artificial conceits,  
 Or in moods which bred softness, indolence, or luxury,  
 Who spoke of love and justice, but practised  
 Gross selfishness between class and class,  
 Sex and sex, condition and condition ,  
 And had perverted their language, once beautiful,  
 Into jargons of empty elegance and unmeaning futility
- C 14 — For the glory of Hellas, and her freedom and wisdom had departed ,  
 Rome's great systems of law, organisation, and universal citizenship  
 Had sunk into the mire of ecclesiastical formalism ,  
 And dogmatism, and exclusive arrogance ,  
 The living fire of Persia's Prophet scarce smouldered ,  
 In her votaries of luxury ,  
 In India, countless castes and kingdoms  
 Cancelled the unity of Buddha's teaching ,  
 The wounds of China had not yet been healed by T'ang culture ,  
 And Japan was still a disciple of China.

- C 15 —Then, in the sacred city of pagan Arabia,  
 Shone a light that spread in all directions  
 It was centrally placed for the bounds of the world  
 Of men's habitations in Asia, Europe, and Africa  
 It made the Arabs the leading nation of culture and science,  
 Of organised enterprise, law, and arts,  
 With a zeal for the conquest of Nature and her mysteries
- C 16 —Behold! There was born into the world of sense  
 The unlettered Apostle, the comely child,  
 Noble of birth, but nobler still  
 In the grace and wisdom of human love  
 And human understanding, dowered with the key  
 Which opened to him the enchanted palace  
 Of nature, marked out to receive—  
 To receive and preach in burning words  
 The spiritual truth and message of the Most High
- C 17 —Others before him had been born  
 In darkness, beyond the reach  
 Of history, others again it pleased God  
 To send as Messengers, preaching, working  
 In the dim twilight of history,  
 Wherein men fashion legends  
 After their own hearts, and dimly seek  
 A light afar, remote from the lives  
 Mean and sordid, such as they knew
- C 18 —But Muhammad came in the fullest blaze  
 Of history, with no learning he put to shame  
 The wisdom of the learned, with pasture folk  
 He lived and worked, and won their love, in hills  
 And valleys, caves and deserts, he wandered,  
 But never lost his way to truth and righteousness,  
 From his pure and spotless heart the Angels washed  
 Off the dust that flew around him, through the ways  
 Of crooked city folk, he walked upright and straight,  
 And won from them the ungrudging name  
 Of the Man of Faith<sup>1</sup> who never broke his word
- C 19 —To the Praiseworthy<sup>2</sup> indeed be praise  
 Born in the Sacred City,<sup>3</sup> he destroyed  
 Its superstition, loyal to his people to the core,

1 Al-Āmin

2 Muḥammad

3 Mecca

He stood for all humanity , orphan born  
 And poor, he envied ~~not the rich~~,  
 And made his special care all ~~those~~  
 Whom the world neglected or oppressed,—  
 Orphans, women, slaves, and those in need  
 Of food or comforts, mental solace, spiritual strength,  
 Or virtues downtrodden in the haunts of men

C 20 —His mother <sup>4</sup> and his foster mother <sup>5</sup>  
 Loved and wondered at the child ,  
 His grandfather, 'Abdul Muttalib,  
 Of all his twice eight children and their offspring,  
 Loved him best and all his sweet and gentle ways ,  
 His uncle Abū Tālib, loth though he was  
 To give up the cult of his fathers,  
 Knew well the purity of Muhammad's  
 Mind and soul, and was his stoutest champion  
 When the other chiefs of Mecca sought to kill  
 The man who challenged in his person  
 Their narrow Pagan selfish lives

C 21 —To his cousin 'Alī, the well beloved, <sup>6</sup>  
 Born when he was thirty, he appeared  
 As the very pattern of a perfect man,  
 As gentle as he was wise and true and strong,  
 The one in whose defence and aid  
 He spent his utmost strength and skill,  
 Holding life cheap in support of a cause so high,  
 And placing without reserve his chivalry,  
 His prowess, his wit and learning, and his sword  
 At the service of this mighty Messenger of God

C 22 —Not till the age of forty <sup>7</sup> did he receive  
 The Commission to stand forth and proclaim  
 The Bounty of God, and His gift, to lowly Man,  
 Of knowledge by Word and Pen , but all through  
 His years of preparation he did search  
 The Truth he sought it in Nature's forms and laws,  
 Her beauty and her stern unflinching ways ,  
 He sought it in the inner world  
 Of human lives, men's joys and sorrows,  
 Their kindly virtues and their sins

4 Āmina 5 Ḥalīma 6 Murtadhā 7 The Arabian year before H 10 was roughly  
 lunı solar See Appendix XI, p 1077

Of pride, injustice, cruel wrong,  
 And greed of gain, scarce checked by the inner voice  
 That spoke of duty, moral law, and higher still,  
 The Will Supreme of God, to which the will  
 Of man must tune itself to find its highest bliss

- C 23 —But he grew steadfastly in virtue and purity,  
 Untaught by men, he learnt from them, and learned  
 To teach them, even as a boy of nine,  
 When he went in a trade caravan with Abū Tālib  
 To Syria,<sup>8</sup> his tender soul marked inwardly  
 How God did speak in the wide expanse  
 Of deserts, in the stern grandeur of rocks,  
 In the refreshing flow of streams, in the smiling  
 Bloom of gardens, in the art and skill with which  
 Men and birds and all life sought for light  
 From the Life of Lives, even as every plant  
 Seeks through devious ways the light of the Sun
- C 24 —Nor less was he grieved at Man's ingratitude  
 When he rebelled and held as naught the Signs  
 Of God, and turned His gifts to baser uses,  
 Driving rarer souls to hermit life,  
 Clouding the heavenly mirror of pure affections  
 With selfish passions, mad unseemly wrangles,  
 And hard unhallowed loathsome tortures of themselves
- C 25 —He worked, and joyed in honest labour,  
 He traded with integrity to himself and to others,  
 He joined the throngs of cities and their busy life,  
 But saw its good and evil as types  
 Of an inner and more lasting life hereafter,  
 People gladly sought his help as umpire  
 And peacemaker because they knew his soul  
 Was just and righteous he loved the society  
 Of old and young, but oft withdrew to solitude  
 For Prayer and inward spiritual strength,  
 He despised not wealth but used it for others,  
 He was happy in poverty and used it as his badge

8 It was on such visits that he met and conversed with Nestorian Christian monks like Baḥīrā who were quick to recognise his spiritual worth. Perhaps the meeting was in Busrā <sup>بُصْرَى</sup> in the Jabal Druze district of Syria some 80 miles south of Damascus. There was another Busrā in Edom, north of Petra in Transjordan. Busrā was famous for trade in costly red dyes and is referred to as Bozrah in Isaiah, lxiii 1. Neither of these towns is to be confounded with the modern Basra.

And his pride<sup>9</sup> when wealth was within his reach  
But not within his grasp, as a man among men.

- C 26 —At twenty-five he was united in the holy bonds  
Of wedlock with Khadija the Great, the noble lady  
Who befriended him when he had no worldly resources,  
Trusted him when his worth was little known,  
Encouraged and understood him in his spiritual struggles,  
Believed in him when with trembling steps  
He took up the Call and withstood obloquy,  
Persecution, insults, threats, and tortures,  
And was a life long help mate till she was gathered  
To the saints in his fifty first year,—  
A perfect woman, the mother of those that believe
- C 27 —There is a cave in the side of Mount Hiraā  
Some three miles north of the City of Mecca,  
In a valley which turns left from the road to 'Arafat,  
To which Muhammad used to retire for peaceful contemplation  
Often alone, but sometimes with Khadija  
Days and nights he spent there with his Lord  
Hard were the problems he revolved in his mind,—  
Harder and more cross grained than the red granite  
Of the rock around him,—problems not his own,  
But his people's, yea, and of human destiny,  
Of the mercy of God, and the age long conflict  
Of evil and righteousness, sin and abounding Grace
- C 28 —Not till forty years of earthly life had passed  
That the veil was lifted from the Preserved Tablet  
And its contents began to be transferred to the tablet of his mind,  
To be proclaimed to the world, and read and studied  
For all time,—a fountain of mercy and wisdom,  
A warning to the heedless, a guide to the erring,  
An assurance to those in doubt, a solace to the suffering,  
A hope to those in despair,—to complete the chain  
Of Revelation through the mouths  
Of divinely inspired Apostles.
- C 29 —The Chosen One<sup>10</sup> was in the Cave of Hiraā  
For two years and more he had prayed there and adored  
His Creator and wondered at the mystery  
Of man with his corruptible flesh, just growing

Out of a clot,<sup>10-A</sup> and the soul in him  
 Reaching out to knowledge sublime, new  
 And ever new, taught by the bounty  
 Of God, and leading to that which man himself  
 Knoweth not And now, behold ! a dazzling  
 Vision of beauty and light overpowered his senses,  
 And he heard the word "*Iqraa* !"

- C 30 — "*Iqraa* !" — which being interpreted may mean  
 " Read ! " or " Proclaim ! " or " Recite ! "  
 The unlettered Apostle was puzzled ,  
 He could not read The Angel seemed  
 To press him to his breast in a close embrace,  
 And the cry rang clear "*Iqraa* ! "  
 And so it happened three times, until  
 The first overpowering sensation yielded  
 To a collected grasp of the words which made clear  
 His Mission, its Author, God the Creator ,  
 Its subject, Man, God's wondrous handiwork,  
 Capable, by Grace, of rising to heights sublime ,  
 And the instrument of that mission, the sanctified Pen,  
 And the sanctified Book, the Gift of God,  
 Which men might read, or write, or study, or treasure in their souls
- C 31 — The veil was lifted from the Chosen One's eyes,  
 And his soul for a moment was filled with divine  
 Ecstasy When this passed,  
 And he returned to the world of Time  
 And Circumstance and this world of Sense,  
 He felt like one whose eyes had seen  
 A light of dazzling beauty, and felt dazed  
 On his return to common sights  
 The darkness now seemed tenfold dark ,  
 The solitude seemed tenfold empty ,  
 The mount of Hira, henceforth known  
 As the Mountain of Light,<sup>11</sup> the mere shell  
 Of an intense memory Was it a dream ?  
 Terror seized his limbs and he straightway sought  
 Her who shared his inmost life,  
 And told her of his sense of exaltation,  
 And the awful void when the curtain closed
- C 32 — She understood, rejoiced, and comforted him,  
 Gave strength to his shaken senses ;

10-A See xcvi 2, and n 6205

11. Jabal un-Nūr

Wrapped up in warmth his shivering body,  
 Unused as yet to bear the strain and stress  
 Of an experience rare to mortal men  
 She knew it was no dream or delusion  
 She went and consulted her cousin Waraqa,  
 A devout worshipper of God in the Faith of Christ,  
 Learned in spiritual lore    He listened  
 And with her rejoiced that he, Muhammad,  
 Was God's Chosen One to renew the Faith

- C 33 - She said    Blessed be thou, Chosen One !  
 Do we not see thy inner life,—true and pure ?  
 Do not all see thy outer life,—kind and gentle ?—  
 Loyal to kin, hospitable to strangers ?  
 No thought of harm or mischief ever stained thy mind  
 Nor word ever passed thy lips that was not true  
 Or stilled not the passions of narrower men  
 Ever ready in the service of God, thou art he  
 Of whom I bear witness    there's no God but He,  
 And thou art His chosen Apostle

- C 34 — Khadija believed, exalted in faith  
 Above all women, 'Alī, the well-beloved,  
 Then a child of ten, but lion hearted,  
 Plighted his faith, and became from that moment  
 The right hand of Islam, Abū Bakr, the Sincere,<sup>12</sup>  
 The True hearted, the man of wealth and influence,  
 Who used both without stint for the Cause,  
 The sober Counsellor, the inseparable friend,  
 Never hesitated to declare his faith,  
 And Zaid, the freedman of Muhammad,  
 Counted his freedom as naught compared  
 With the service of Muhammad and Islam  
 These were the first fruits of the mission  
 A woman, a child, a man of affairs, and a freedman,  
 All banded together in the equality of Islam

- C 35 — The revelation had come, the mission  
 And the inspiration    But what was it leading to ?  
 It was a miracle, but not in the sense  
 Of a reversing of Nature, Mustafā's vision  
 Was linked with Eternity, but he was no soothsayer  
 Foretelling passing events, the mysteries

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12 Ṣadiq or Ṣiddiq, the title of Abū Bakr

Of knowledge were being opened out, but his message  
 Was no mere esoteric doctrine, to be grasped  
 By a few in contemplation, fleeing from action,  
 Nor was it the practice of single or social monasticism,  
 Undisturbed by the whims or passions of life  
**He was asked to stand forth, to preach, to declare**  
**The One Universal God, the Gracious, the Merciful,**  
**And to lead men to the Right and forbid the Wrong**

- C 36 —The wrong ?—The selfish pride of birth,  
 The massing of power and wealth in the hands  
 Of a few, the slaughter of female infants,  
 The orgies of gambling and drunkenness,  
 The frauds of temples and idols and priests,  
 The feuds and arrogance of tribes and races,  
 The separation of Sacred and Profane,  
 As if the unity of All Life and All Truth  
 Did not flow from the unity of God Most High
- C 37 —He was loyal to his family, but could he support  
 Their monopoly of power ?—To his tribe,  
 But were the Quraish the only creatures  
 Of God ?—To the temple of Mecca, but  
 Could he wink at Lāt and 'Uzzā, and the other monsters,  
 Whose worship killed the spiritual growth of Man ?—  
 To the earlier Revelations, but could he hold  
 With the superstitions and falsehoods, the dogmas and creeds  
 Which went against reason and nature, and the inner light  
 Which was now fanned into flame by the Will of God ?
- C 38 —And so his very virtues and loyalties pointed  
 To offence and conflict, mockery and misrepresentation,  
 Hatred and persecution, threats, tortures, and exile  
 For him and his, and martyrdoms, wars, revolutions,  
 And the shaking of the foundations of history  
 And the social order But Islam meant  
 The willing submission of his will to God,  
 The active attainment of Peace through Conflict
- C 39 —And he gave that submission, not without effort,  
 Even as Moses<sup>13</sup> did before him,  
 And Jesus<sup>14</sup> in the agony of the garden of Gethsemane

<sup>13</sup> Qur an xx 25 32

<sup>14</sup> Matt xxvi 39



- C 40.—For three and twenty years, in patience,  
Conflict, hope, and final triumph,  
Did this man of God receive  
And teach the Message of the Most High  
It came, like the fruit of the soul's own yearning,  
To teach profound spiritual truths,  
Answer questions, appeal to men  
In their doubts and fears, help and put heart  
In them in moments of trial, and ordain  
For them laws by which they could live  
In society lives of purity, goodness and peace
- C 41 — These messages came as inspiration  
To Muhammad as the need arose,  
On different occasions and in different places  
He recited them, and they were recorded  
By the Pen they were imprinted on his heart  
And mind, and on the memory  
Of his loving disciples as the body  
Of sacred Scripture grew, it was arranged  
For purposes of public prayer and reading  
This is the book, or the Reading, or the Qur ān



INTRODUCTION TO SŪRA I (*Fātiḥa*)

C 42 —First comes that beautiful Sūra,<sup>15</sup>

The Opening Chapter<sup>16</sup> of Seven Verses,<sup>17</sup>  
 Rightly called the Essence of the Book  
 It teaches us the perfect Prayer  
 For if we can pray aright, it means  
 That we have some knowledge of God  
 And His attributes, of His relations  
 To us and His creation, which includes  
 Ourselves, that we glimpse the source  
 From which we come, and that final goal  
 Which is our spiritual destiny  
 Under God's true judgment then  
 We offer ourselves to God and seek His light

C 43 —Prayer is the heart of Religion and Faith

But how shall we pray? What words shall convey  
 The yearnings of our miserable ignorant hearts  
 To the Knower of all? Is it worthy of Him  
 Or of our spiritual nature to ask  
 For vanities, or even for such physical needs  
 As our daily bread? The Inspired One  
 Taught us a Prayer that sums up our faith,  
 Our hope, and our aspiration in things that matter  
 We think in devotion of God's name and His Nature,  
 We praise Him for His creation and His Cherishing care,  
 We call to mind the Realities, seen and unseen,  
 We offer Him worship and ask for His guidance,  
 And we know the straight from the crooked path  
 By the light of His grace that illumines the righteous

15 Each chapter or portion of the Qur'ān is called a Sūra which means a Degree or Step by which we mount up. Sometimes whole Sūras were revealed and sometimes portions which were arranged together according to subject matter under the Apostle's directions. Some Sūras are long, and some are short but a logical thread runs through them all. Each verse of the Sūra is called an *Āyat* (plural, *Āyāt*), which means also a sign. A verse of revelation is a Sign of God's wisdom and goodness just as much as God's beautiful handiwork in the material creation or His dealings in history are signs to us if we would understand. Some *Āyats* are long, and some are short. The *Āyat* is the true unit of the Qur'ān.

16 *Fātiḥa*—Opening Chapter

17 These seven verses form a complete unit by themselves, and are recited in every prayer and on many other occasions. Cf. xv 87

## Sūra I

*Fātiḥa*, or the Opening Chapter <sup>18</sup>

1 In the name of God, Most Gracious,  
Most Merciful <sup>19</sup>

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

2 Praise be to God,  
The Cherisher and Sustainer <sup>20</sup> of  
the Worlds,

۲- اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ۝

3 Most Gracious, Most Merciful,

۳- الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ۝

4 Master of the Day of Judgment

۴- مَلِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ ۝

5 Thee do we worship,<sup>21</sup>  
And Thine aid we seek

۵- اِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَاِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِيْنُ ۝

18 By universal consent it is rightly placed at the beginning of the Qur'ān as summing up in marvellously terse and comprehensive words man's relation to God in contemplation and prayer. In our spiritual contemplation the first words should be those of praise. If the praise is from our inmost being it brings us into union with God's will. Then our eyes see all good, peace and harmony. Evil rebellion and conflict are purged out. They do not exist for us, for our eyes are lifted up above them in praise. Then we see God's attributes better (verses 2-4). This leads us to the attitude of worship and acknowledgment (verse 5). And finally comes prayer for guidance and a contemplation of what guidance means (verses 6-7).

God needs no praise for He is above all praise. He needs no petition for He knows our needs better than we do ourselves, and His bounties are open without asking to the righteous and the sinner alike. The prayer is for our own spiritual education, consolation and confirmation.

That is why the words in this Sūra are given to us in the form in which we should utter them. When we reach enlightenment they flow spontaneously from us.

19 The Arabic words *Rahmān* and *Rahīm* translated 'Most Gracious and Most Merciful' are both intensive forms referring to different aspects of God's attribute of Mercy. The Arabic intensive is more suited to express God's attributes than the superlative degree in English. The latter implies a comparison with other beings or with other times or places while there is no being like unto God and He is independent of Time and Place. Mercy may imply pity, long suffering, patience and forgiveness, all of which the sinner needs and God Most Merciful bestows in abundant measure. But there is a Mercy that goes before even the need arises, the Grace which is ever watchful and flows from God Most Gracious to all His creatures, protecting them, preserving them, guiding them and leading them to clearer light and higher life. For this reason the attribute *Rahmān* (Most Gracious) is not applied to any but God, but the attribute *Rahīm* (Merciful) is a general term and may also be applied to Men. To make us contemplate these boundless gifts of God the formula 'In the name of God Most Gracious Most Merciful' is placed before every Sūra of the Qur'ān (except the ninth) and repeated at the beginning of every act by the Muslim who dedicates his life to God and whose hope is in His Mercy.

Opinion is divided whether the *Bismillāh* should be numbered as a separate verse or not. It is unanimously agreed that it is a part of the Qur'ān. Therefore it is better to give it an independent number in the first Sūra. For subsequent Sūras it is treated as an introduction or head line and therefore not numbered.

20 The Arabic word *Rabb* usually translated Lord has also the meaning of cherishing, sustaining, bringing to maturity. God cares for all the worlds He has created.

There are many worlds—astronomical and physical, worlds of thought, spiritual worlds and so on. In every one of them God is all in all. We express only one aspect of it when we say 'In Him we live and move and have our being.' The mystical division between (1) *Nāsūt* the human world knowable by the senses, (2) *Malakūt* the invisible world of angels and (3) *Lāhūt* the divine world of Reality requires a whole volume to explain it.

21 On realizing in our souls God's love and care, His grace and mercy and His power and justice (as Ruler of the Day of Judgment) the immediate result is that we bend in the act of worship and see both our shortcomings and His all sufficient power. The emphatic form means that not only do we reach the position of worshipping God and asking for His help, but we worship Him alone and ask for His aid only. For there is none other than He worthy of our devotion and able to help us. The plural we indicates that we associate ourselves with all who seek God, thus strengthening ourselves and strengthening them in a fellowship of faith.

6 Show<sup>22</sup> us the straight way,

7 The way of those on whom  
Thou hast bestowed Thy Grace,  
Those whose (portion)  
Is not wrath,<sup>23</sup>  
And who go not astray<sup>24</sup>

٦- إِهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ ۝

٧- صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ غَيْرِ

الْمَعْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ ۝



22 If we translate by the English word *guide* we shall have to say *Guide us to and in the straight Way*. For we may be wandering aimlessly and the first step is to find the Way, and the second need is to keep in the Way—our own wisdom may fail in either case. The straight Way is often the narrow Way or the steep Way which many people shun (xc 11). By the world's perversity the straight Way is sometimes stigmatized and the crooked Way praised. How are we to judge? We must ask for God's guidance. With a little spiritual insight we shall see which are the people who walk in the light of God's grace and which are those that walk in the darkness of Wrath. This also would help our judgment.

23 Note that the words relating to Grace are connected actively with God—those relating to Wrath are impersonal. In the one case God's Mercy encompasses us beyond our deserts. In the other case our own actions are responsible for the Wrath—the negative of Grace—Peace or Harmony.

24 Are there two categories?—those who are in the darkness of Wrath and those who stray? The first are those who deliberately break God's law—the second those who stray out of carelessness or negligence. Both are responsible for their own acts or omissions. In opposition to both are the people who are in the light of God's Grace—for His Grace not only protects them from active wrong (if they will only submit their will to Him) but also from straying into paths of temptation or carelessness. The negative *fair* should be construed as applying, not to the way, but as describing men protected from two dangers by God's Grace.

INTRODUCTION TO SŪRA II (*Baqara*)

As the Opening Sūra sums up in seven beautiful verses the essence of the Qur-ān, so this Sūra sums up in 286 verses the whole teaching of the Qur-ān. It is a closely reasoned argument.

**Summary**—It begins (verses 1-29) with mystic doctrine as to the three kinds of men and how they receive God's message.

This leads to the story of the creation of man, the high destiny intended for him, his fall, and the hope held out to him (11 30-39).

Israel's story is then told according to their own records and traditions—what privileges they received and how they abused them (11 40-86), thus illustrating again as by a parable the general story of man.

In particular, reference is made to Moses and Jesus and their struggles with an unruly people—how the people of the Book played false with their own lights and in their pride rejected Muhammad, who came in the true line of apostolic succession (11 87-121).

They falsely laid claim to the virtues of Father Abraham—he was indeed a righteous Imām, but he was the progenitor of Isma'il's line (Arabs) as well as of Israel's line, and he with Ismā'il built the Ka'ba (Temple of Mecca) and purified it, thus establishing a common religion, of which Islam is the universal exponent (11 122-141).

The Ka'ba was now to be the centre of universal worship and the symbol of Islamic unity (11 142-167).

The Islamic *Ummat* (brotherhood) having thus been established with its definite centre and symbol, ordinances are laid down for the social life of the community, with the proviso (11 177) that righteousness does not consist in formalities, but in faith, kindness, prayer, charity, probity, and patience under suffering. The ordinances relate to food and drink, bequests, fasts, *jihād*, wine and gambling, treatment of orphans and women, etc (11 168-242).

Lest the subject of *jihād* should be misunderstood, it is taken up again in the story of Saul, Goliath and David, in contrast to the story of Jesus (11 243-253).

And so the lesson is enforced that true virtue lies in practical deeds of manliness, kindness, and good faith (11 254-283), and God's nature is called to mind in the sublime *Āyat ul Kursī*, the Verse of the Throne (11 255).

The Sūra ends with an exhortation to Faith, Obedience, a sense of Personal Responsibility, and Prayer (11 284-286).

This is the longest Sūra of the Qur-ān, and in it occurs the longest verse (11 282). The name of the Sūra is from the Parable of the Heifer in 11 67-71, which illustrates the insufficiency of carping obedience. When faith is lost, people put off obedience with various excuses—even when at last they obey in the letter, they fail in the spirit, which means that they get fossilized, and their self-sufficiency prevents them from seeing that spiritually they are not alive but dead. For life is movement, activity, striving, fighting against baser things. And this is the burden of the Sūra.

This is in the main an early Medina Sūra.

C 44—The Message of God is a guide that is sure

(11 1-29) To those who seek His light. But those  
Who reject faith are blind—their hearts  
Are sealed. Woe to the hypocrites,  
Self-deceived and deceiving others,  
With mockery on their lips, and mischief  
In their hearts, and fear, the clouds  
That bring fertilizing rain to others,  
To them bring but deafening thunder peals  
And lightning flashes blinding to their eyes.

## Sūra II

*Baqara, or The Heifer*

*In the name of God, Most Gracious,  
Most Merciful*

1 **A. L. M.**<sup>25</sup>

2 This is the Book,  
In it is guidance sure, without doubt,  
To those who fear<sup>26</sup> God,

3 Who believe in the Unseen,  
Are steadfast in prayer,  
And spend out of what We  
Have provided for them,<sup>27</sup>

4 And who believe in the Revelation  
Sent to thee,



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

بِسمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

ذَٰلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ

الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْغَيْبِ وَيُقِيمُونَ  
الصَّلَاةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ

وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ وَ

25 These are abbreviated letters the *Muqatta'at* on which a general discussion will be found in Appendix I (to be printed at the end of this Sūra)

The particular letters A L M are found prefixed to this Sūra and Sūras iii xxix xxx, xxxi and xxxii (six in all) In ii and iii the argument is about the rise and fall of nations their past and their future in history with ordinances for the new universal People of Islam In xxix a similar argument about nations leads off to the mystery of Life and Death Failure and Triumph Past and Future in the history of individual souls The burden of xxx is that God is the source of all things and all things return to Him In xxxi and xxxii the same lesson is enforced God is the Creator and He will be the judge on the Last Day There is therefore a common thread the mystery of Life and Death Beginning and End

Much has been written about the meaning of these letters but most of it is pure conjecture Some commentators are content to recognise them as some mystic symbols of which it is unprofitable to discuss the meaning by mere verbal logic In mysticism we accept symbols as such for the time being their esoteric meaning comes from the inner light when we are ready for it

Among the conjectures there are two plausible theories One is that each initial represents an attribute of God Among the attributes it is not difficult to select three which will fit in with these letters Another theory favoured by Baiḍhāwī is that these letters are the initial the final and the middle (or again the initial) letter of three names Allāh Jibrīl and Muḥammad—the source of revelation the heavenly Messenger who brought it and the human Messenger through whom it was promulgated in human speech This might be appropriate to the first Sūra (which *Baqara* really is if we treat *Fātiha* as a preface) but if it was prefixed to others why to these six only?

If we look to the nature of the sounds which the letters represent A is a breathing and comes from the throat L is a lingual palatal dental sound from the middle of the mouth and M is a labial or lip sound Can we not take them as symbolical of the Beginning Middle and End? If so are they not appropriate to the Sūras which treat specifically of Life Growth and Death—the Beginning and the End? In the New Testament Greek scripture the first and the last letters of the Greek alphabet Alpha and Omega are symbolical of the Beginning and the End and give one of the titles of God I am Alpha and Omega the beginning and the ending saith the Lord which is and which was and which is to come the Almighty (Rev i 8) The symbolism of the three things is better with three letters

26 *Taqwā* and the verbs and nouns connected with the root signify (1) the fear of God which according to the writer of Proverbs (i 7) in the Old Testament is the beginning of Wisdom, (2) restraint or guarding one's tongue hand and heart from evil, (3) hence righteousness pious good conduct All these ideas are implied in the translation only one or other of these ideas can be indicated according to the context See also xlvii 17 and lxxiv 56 n 5808

27 All bounties proceed from God They may be physical gifts, e.g. food, clothing, houses, gardens, wealth etc or intangible gifts e.g. influence power birth and the opportunities flowing from it health talents etc or spiritual gifts e.g. insight into good and evil understanding of men, the capacity for love etc We are to use all in humility and moderation But we are also to give out of every one of them something that contributes to the well being of others We are to be neither ascetics nor luxurious sybarites, neither selfish misers nor thoughtless prodigals


And sent before thy time,  
And (in their hearts)  
Have the assurance of the  
Hereafter <sup>28</sup>

- 5 They are on (true) guidance,  
From their Lord, and it is  
These who will prosper <sup>29</sup>

- 6 ~~As~~ As to those who reject Faith, <sup>30</sup>  
It is the same to them  
Whether thou warn them  
Or do not warn them,  
They will not believe

- 7 God hath set a seal <sup>31</sup>  
On their hearts and on their hearing,  
And on their eyes is a veil,  
Great is the penalty they (incur) <sup>32</sup>

## SECTION 2

- 8 f the people there are some  
who say <sup>33</sup>  
"We believe in God and the Last  
Day,"  
But they do not (really) believe

- 9 Fain would they deceive  
God and those who believe,  
But they only deceive themselves,  
And realize (it) not <sup>1</sup>

- 10 In their hearts is a disease ,

مَا أُنْزِلَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ وَبِالْآخِرَةِ هُمْ  
يُوقِنُونَ ۝

هـ- أُولَٰئِكَ عَلَىٰ هُدًى مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ وَأُولَٰئِكَ  
هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ۝

٦- إِنَّ الدِّينَ كَفَرُوا سَوَاءٌ عَلَيْهِمْ  
أَنذَرْتَهُمْ أَمْ لَمْ تُنذِرْهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ۝

٧- خَتَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِمْ وَعَلَىٰ سَمْعِهِمْ وَ  
عَلَىٰ أَبْصَارِهِمْ غِشَاوَةٌ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ۝

٨- وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَقُولُ آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَ  
بِالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَمَا هُمْ بِمُؤْمِنِينَ ۝

٩- يُخَادِعُونَ اللَّهَ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَمَا  
يَخْدَعُونَ إِلَّا أَنْفُسَهُمْ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ ۝

١٠- فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ فَرَدَّهُمُ اللَّهُ مَرَضًا

28 Righteousness comes from a secure faith from sincere devotion to God and from unselfish service to Man

29 Prosperity must be taken as referring to all the kinds of bounty which we discussed in the note to 11 3 above The right use of one kind leads to an increase in that and other kinds and that is prosperity

30 *Kafara kufr kāfir* and derivative forms of the word imply a deliberate rejection of Faith as opposed to a mistaken idea of God or faith which is not inconsistent with an earnest desire to see the truth Where there is such desire the grace and mercy of God gives guidance But that guidance is not efficacious when it is deliberately rejected and the possibility of rejection follows from the grant of free will The consequence of the rejection is that the spiritual faculties become dead or impervious to better influences See also n 93 to 11 88

31 All actions are referred to God Therefore when we get the penalty of our deliberate sin, and our senses become impervious to good the penalty is referred to the justice of God

32 The penalty here is the opposite of the prosperity referred to in 11 5 As we go down the path of sin our penalty gathers momentum just as goodness brings its own capacity for greater goodness

33 We now come to a third class of people the hypocrites They are untrue to themselves and therefore their hearts are diseased (11 10) The disease tends to spread like all evil They are curable, but if they harden their hearts, they soon pass into the category of those who deliberately reject light

And God has increased their  
disease <sup>34</sup>  
And grievous is the penalty they  
(incur),  
Because they are false  
(to themselves)

وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ لَا يَمُوتُونَ  
يَكْدِبُونَ ○

11 When it is said to them  
"Make not mischief on the earth,"  
They say "Why, we only  
Want to make peace!"

۱۱- وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ لَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ  
قَالُوا إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ مُصْلِحُونَ ○

12 Of a surety, they are the ones  
Who make mischief,  
But they realise (it) not <sup>35</sup>

۱۲- أَلَا إِنَّهُمْ هُمُ الْمُفْسِدُونَ وَلَكِنْ لَا  
يَشْعُرُونَ ○

13 When it is said to them  
"Believe as the others believe "  
They say "Shall we believe  
As the fools believe ? " —  
Nay, of a surety they are the fools,  
But they do not know <sup>36</sup>

۱۳- وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمُ امْكُفُوا كَمَا آمَنَ النَّاسُ  
قَالُوا أَتُؤْمِنُ كَمَا آمَنَ السُّفَهَاءُ أَلَا إِنَّهُمْ  
هُمُ السُّفَهَاءُ وَلَكِنْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ○

14 When they meet those who believe, <sup>37</sup>  
They say "We believe, "  
But when they are alone  
With their evil ones,  
They say "We are really with you  
We (were) only jesting "

۱۴- وَإِذَا لَقُوا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قَالُوا آمَنَّا وَإِذَا  
خَلَوْا إِلَىٰ شُيَاطِينِهِمْ قَالُوا إِنَّا مَعَكُمْ إِنَّمَا  
نَحْنُ مُسْتَهْزَءُونَ ○

15 God will throw back  
Their mockery on them,  
And give them rope in their  
trespasses,  
So they will wander like blind ones  
(To and fro)

۱۵- اللَّهُ يَسْتَهْزِئُ بِهِمْ وَيَمُدُّهُمْ فِي طُغْيَانِهِمْ  
يَعْمَهُونَ ○

16 These are they who have bartered  
Guidance for error

۱۶- أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ اشْتَرُوا الضَّلَالَةَ بِالْهُدَىٰ

34 The insincere man who thinks he can get the best of both worlds by compromising with good and evil only increases the disease of his heart because he is not true to himself. Even the good which comes to him he can pervert to evil. So the rain which fills out the ear of corn or lends fragrance to the rose also lends strength to the thorn or adds strength to the poison of the deadly night shade.

35 Much mischief is caused (sometimes unwittingly) by people who think that they have a mission of peace when they have not even a true perception of right and wrong. By their blind arrogance they depress the good and encourage the evil.

36 This is another phase of the hypocrite and the cynic. Faith, he says, is good enough for fools. But his cynicism may be the greatest folly in the eyes of God.

37 A deeper phase of insincerity is actual duplicity. But it never pays in the end. If we compare such a man to a trader, he loses in the bargain.



But their traffic is profitless,  
And they have lost true direction

- 17 ~~And~~ their similitude is that of a man<sup>38</sup>

Who kindled a fire,  
When it lighted all around him,  
God took away their light  
And left them in utter darkness  
So they could not see

- 18 Deaf, dumb, and blind,  
They will not return (to the path)

- 19 Or (another similitude)<sup>39</sup>  
Is that of a rain-laden cloud  
From the sky in it are zones  
of darkness, and thunder and lightning  
They press their fingers in their ears  
To keep out the stunning thunderclap,  
The while they are in terror of death  
But God is ever round  
The rejecters of Faith!

20. The lightning all but snatches away  
Their sight, every time the light  
(Helps) them, they walk therein,  
And when the darkness grows on them,  
They stand still  
And if God willed, He could take away  
Their faculty of hearing and seeing,  
For God hath power over all things

فَمَا رِبَحَتْ تِجَارَتُهُمْ وَمَا كَانُوا مُهْتَدِينَ ۝

١٧- مَثَلُهُمْ كَمَثَلِ الَّذِي اسْتَوْقَدَ نَارًا فَلَمَّا أَضَاءَتْ مَا حَوْلَهُ ذَهَبَ اللَّهُ بِنُورِهِمْ وَتَرَكَهُمْ فِي ظُلُمٍ لَا يَبْصُرُونَ ۝

١٨- صُمُّهُمْ بَلَمَّ عَمَىٰ فَهُمْ لَا يَرْجِعُونَ ۝

١٩- أَوْ كَصَيْبٍ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ فِيهِ ظُلُمٌ وَرَعْدٌ وَنُقُرٌّ ۖ يَجْعَلُونَ اصْأَاعَهُمْ فِي أَذَانِهِمْ مِنَ الصَّوَاعِقِ حَذَرَ الْمَوْتِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ مُحِيطٌ بِالْكَافِرِينَ ۝

٢٠- يَكَادُ الْبَرْقُ يَحْطِفُ أَبْصَارَهُمْ كُلَّمَا أَضَاءَ لَهُمْ مَشَوْا فِيهِ ۖ وَإِذَا أظْلَمَ عَلَيْهِمْ قَامُوا ۚ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَذَهَبَ بِسَمْعِهِمْ وَأَبْصَارِهِمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ۝

38 The man wanted light he only kindled a fire It produced a blaze and won the applause of all around But it did not last long When the flame went out as was inevitable the darkness was worse than before And they all lost their way So hypocrisy, deception arrogant compromise with evil cynicism or duplicity may win temporary applause But the true light of faith and sincerity is wanting and therefore it must mislead and ruin all concerned In the consternation they cannot speak or hear each other and of course they cannot see, so they end like the deliberate rejecters of Faith (u 7) wildly groping about dumb, deaf and blind

39 A wonderfully graphic and powerful simile applying to those who reject Faith In their self sufficiency they are undisturbed normally But what happens when a great storm break over them? They cover their ears against thunder claps and the lightning nearly blinds them They are in mortal fear but God encompasses them around—even them for He at all times encompasses all He gives them rope In the intervals of deafening noise and blinding flashes there are moments of steady light and these creatures take advantage of them but again they are plunged into darkness Perhaps they curse perhaps they think that the few moments of effective light are due to their own intelligence! How much wiser would they be if they humbled themselves and sought the light of God!

## SECTION 3

21 ﴿٢١﴾ ye people !

Adore your Guardian Lord,  
Who created you  
And those who came before you,  
That ye may have the chance  
To learn righteousness ,<sup>40</sup>

۲۱- يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اعْبُدُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي  
خَلَقَكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ  
تَتَّقُونَ ۝

22 Who has made the earth your  
couch,  
And the heavens your canopy ,  
And sent down rain from the  
heavens,  
And brought forth therewith  
Fruits for your sustenance,  
Then set not up rivals<sup>41</sup> unto God  
When ye know (the truth)

۲۲- الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ الْأَرْضَ وَرَاشًا وَالسَّمَاءَ  
بِنَاءً ۝ وَانزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَخْرَجَ  
بِهِ مِنَ الشَّجَرِ رِزْقًا لَكُمْ ۚ فَلَا تَجْعَلُوا  
لِلَّهِ أَدَادًا ۖ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ۝

23 And if ye are in doubt  
As to what We have revealed  
From time to time to Our servant,  
Then produce a Sūra  
Like thereunto ,  
And call your witnesses or helpers  
(If there are any) besides God,  
If your (doubts) are true<sup>42</sup>

۲۳- وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِمَّا نَزَّلْنَا عَلَىٰ  
عَبْدِنَا ۖ فَاتَّبُوا لِسُورَةٍ مِّنْ قَبْلِهِ ۚ وَادْعُوا  
شُهَدَاءَكُمْ مِّنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ ۖ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ  
صَادِقِينَ ۝

24 But if ye cannot—  
And of a surety ye cannot—  
Then fear the Fire  
Whose fuel is Men and Stones,—  
Which is prepared for those

۲۴- فَإِنْ لَّمْ تَفْعَلُوا وَلَنْ تَفْعَلُوا ۖ فَاتَّقُوا النَّارَ  
الَّتِي وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ ۚ أُعِدَّتْ  
لِلْكَافِرِينَ ۝

40 For Taqwā see II 2 n 26. I connect this dependent clause with adore etc above though it could be connected with created According to my construction the argument will be as follows Adoration is the act of the highest and humblest reverence and worship When you get into that relationship with God Who is your Creator and Guardian your faith produces works of righteousness It is a chance given you will you exercise your free will and take it? If you do, your whole nature will be transformed

41 Further proofs of Gods goodness to you are given in this verse Your whole life physical and spiritual depends upon Him The spiritual is figured by the Canopy of Heaven The truth has been brought plainly before you Will you still resist it and go after false gods the creation of your own fancy? The false gods may be idols superstitions Self or even great or glorious things like Poetry Art or Science when set up as rivals to God They may be pride of race, pride of birth pride of wealth or position, pride of power, pride of learning, or even spiritual pride

42 How do we know that there is revelation and that it is from God? Here is a concrete test The Teacher of Gods Truth has placed before you many Sūras Can you produce one like it? If there is any one besides God who can inspire spiritual truth in such noble language produce your evidence Or is it that your doubts are merely argumentative, refractory against your own inner light or conscience? All true revelation is itself a miracle, and stands on its own merits

Who reject Faith <sup>43</sup>

- 25 But give glad tidings  
To those who believe  
And work righteousness,  
That their portion is Gardens,  
Beneath which rivers flow  
Every time they are fed  
With fruits therefrom,  
They say "Why, this is  
What we were fed with before,"  
For they are given things in  
similitude,  
And they have therein  
Companions pure (and holy), "  
And they abide therein (for ever)

- 26 God disdains not to use  
The similitude of things,  
Lowest <sup>45</sup> as well as highest

٢٥- وَنُفِثَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ  
أَنَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ  
كُلَّمَا رُزِقُوا مِنْهَا مِنْ ثَمَرَةٍ رِزْقًا ۖ قَالُوا  
هَذَا الَّذِي رُزِقْنَا مِنْ قَبْلُ ۖ وَأُتُوا بِهِ  
مُتَشَابِهًا  
وَلَهُمْ فِيهَا أَزْوَاجٌ مُطَهَّرَةٌ ۖ وَهُمْ  
فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ۝

٢٦- إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَسْتَعِجِ أَنْ يَضْرِبَ مَثَلًا

43 If by your own efforts you cannot match the spiritual light and yet contumaciously reject spiritual Faith then there will be a fire in your souls the Punishment that burns up all your cherished idols. Perhaps you will at least fear this penalty which your self loving souls can understand. This fire consumes both the worshippers of the false and the Idols which they falsely worship. Can this bring them to their senses? Its power is not only over the feeling palpitating heart of man (heart in a spiritual sense as it persists long after the physical heart) but he cannot escape from it even if he imagines himself reduced to inertness like stocks or stones for it is all devouring.

44 This is the antithesis to the last verse. If fire is the symbol of Punishment the Garden is the symbol of felicity. And what can be more delightful than a Garden where you observe from a picturesque height a beautiful landscape round you — rivers flowing with crystal water and fruit trees of which the choicest fruit is before you. The fruit of goodness is goodness similar but choicer in every degree of ascent. You think it is the same but it is because of your past experiences and associations of memory. Then there is companionship. If sex is suggested its physical associations are at once negatived by the addition of the word *Mujahharatun* pure and holy. The Arabic epithet is in the intensive form and must be translated by two adjectives denoting purity in the highest degree. The Companionship is that of souls and applies to both sexes in the physical world of men and women. And this felicity is not a mere passing phase but will abide beyond the realms of Time.

45 The word for 'the lowest' in the original Arabic means a gnat a bye word in the Arabic language for the weakest of creatures. In xxix 41 which was revealed before this Sura the similitude of the Spider was used and similarly in xxii 73 there is the similitude of the Fly. For similitudes taken from magnificent forces of nature expressed in exalted language see ii 19 above. To God all His creation has some special meaning appropriate to itself and some of what we consider the lowest creatures have wonderful aptitudes e.g. the spider or the fly. Parables like these may be an occasion of stumbling to those who forsake the path in other words those who deliberately shut their eyes to God's Signs and their Penalty is attributed to God the Cause of all causes. But lest there should be misunderstanding it is immediately added that the stumbling and offence only occur as the result of the sinners own choice of the wrong course. Verses 26 and 27 form one sentence and should be read together. Forsaking the path is defined in ii 27 viz breaking solemn covenants which the sinner's own soul had ratified causing division among mankind who were meant to be one brotherhood and doing as much mischief as possible in the life on this earth for the life beyond will be on another plane where no rope will be given to evil.

The mention of the Covenant (ii 27) has a particular and a general signification. The particular one has reference to the Jewish tradition that a Covenant was entered into with Father Abraham that in return for God's favours the seed of Abraham would serve God faithfully. But as a matter of fact a great part of Abraham's progeny were in constant spiritual rebellion against God as is testified by their own Prophets and Preachers and by Muhammad Mustafā. The general signification is that a similar Covenant is metaphorically entered into by every creature of God for God's loving care we at least owe Him the fullest gratitude and willing obedience. The Sinner before he darkens his own conscience knows this and yet he not only forsakes the path but resists the Grace of God which comes to save him. That is why his case becomes hopeless. But the loss is his own. He cannot spoil God's design. The good man is glad to retrace his steps from any lapses of which he may have been guilty and in his case God's Message reclaims him with complete understanding.

Those who believe know  
That it is truth from their Lord ,  
But those who reject Faith say  
" What means God by this  
similitude ? "  
By it He causes many to stray,  
And many He leads into the right  
path ,  
But He causes not to stray,  
Except those who forsake  
(the path),—

27 Those who break God's Covenant  
After it is ratified,  
And who sunder what God  
Has ordered to be joined,  
And do mischief on earth  
These cause loss (only) to  
themselves

28 How can ye reject <sup>46</sup>  
The faith in God?—  
Seeing that ye were without life,  
And He gave you life ,  
Then will He cause you to die,  
And will again bring you to life ,  
And again to Him will ye return

29 It is He Who hath created for you  
All things that are on earth ,  
Moreover His design comprehended  
the heavens,  
For He gave order and perfection  
To the seven firmaments ,  
And of all things  
He hath perfect knowledge

مَا بَعُوصَةً فَمَا كُفُوهَا ۚ فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا  
فَيَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ ۚ وَأَمَّا  
الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَيَقُولُونَ مَاذَا أَرَادَ اللَّهُ  
بِهَذَا مَثَلًا ۚ يُضِلُّ بِهِ كَثِيرًا ۖ وَيَهْدِي  
بِهِ كَثِيرًا ۚ  
وَمَا يُضِلُّ بِهِ إِلَّا الْفَاسِقِينَ ۝

٢٧- الَّذِينَ يَنْقُضُونَ عَهْدَ اللَّهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ  
مِيثَاقِهِ ۖ وَيَقْطَعُونَ مَا أَمَرَ اللَّهُ بِهِ أَنْ  
يُوصَلَ وَيُفْسِدُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ  
هُمْ الْخَاسِرُونَ ۝

٢٨- كَيْفَ تَكْفُرُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَكُنْتُمْ أَمْوَاتًا  
فَأَحْيَاكُمْ ثُمَّ لِيْبَيْتِكُمْ ثُمَّ يُحْيِيكُمْ ثُمَّ  
إِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ۝

٢٩- هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مَا فِي الْأَرْضِ  
جَمِيعًا ۚ ثُمَّ اسْتَوَىٰ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ فَسَوَّاهُنَّ  
سَبْعَ سَمَاوَاتٍ ۚ  
وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ۝

C 45 —Yet man ! What wonderful destiny

(11 30 39) Is thine ! Created to be  
God's vicegerent on earth !  
A little higher than angels !

46 In the preceding verses God has used various arguments. He has recalled His goodness (11 21 22) resolved doubts (11 23) plainly set forth the penalty of wrong doing (11 24) given glad tidings (11 25) shown how misunderstandings arise from a deliberate rejection of the light and breach of the Covenant (11 26 27) Now (11 28 29) He pleads with His creatures and appeals to their own subjective feelings. He brought you into being. The mysteries of life and death are in His hands. When you die on this earth that is not the end. You were of Him and you must return to Him. Look around you and realise your own dignity. It is from Him. The immeasurable depths of space above and around you may stagger you. They are part of His plan. What you have imagined as the seven firmaments (and any other scheme you may construct) bears witness to His design of order and perfection, for His knowledge (unlike yours) is all comprehending. And yet will you deliberately reject or obscure or deaden the faculty of Faith which has been put into you?

Yet beguiled by evil ! Set for a season  
 On this earth on probation  
 To purge thy stain, with the promise  
 Of guidance and hope from on high,  
 From the Oft Returning, Merciful !  
 Wilt thou choose right and regain  
 Thy spiritual home with God ?

## SECTION 4

- 30 Behold, thy Lord said to the  
     angels " I will create  
 "A vicegerent on earth " They said  
 " Wilt Thou place therein one who  
     will make  
 Mischief therein and shed blood ?—  
 Whilst we do celebrate Thy praises  
 And glorify Thy holy (name) ? "   
 He said " I know what ye know  
     not " 47

٣٠- وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلٰئِكَةِ اِنِّىْ جَاعِلٌ  
 فِي الْاَرْضِ خَلِيْفَةً ۚ قَالُوْا اَتَجْعَلُ فِيْهَا  
 مَنْ يُّفْسِدُ فِيْهَا وَيَسْفِكُ الدِّمَآءَ ۚ وَ  
 نَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِكَ وَنُقَدِّسُ لَكَ ۗ قَالَ  
 اِنِّىْۤ اَعْلَمُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُوْنَ ۝

- 31 And He taught Adam the nature 48  
 Of all things , then He placed them  
 Before the angels, and said " Tell  
     Me  
 The nature of these if ye are right "

٣١- وَعَلَّمَ اٰدَمَ الْاَسْمَآءَ كُلَّهَا ثُمَّ عَرَضَهُمْ  
 عَلَى الْمَلٰئِكَةِ فَقَالَ اَنْبِئُوْنِىْ بِاَسْمَآءِ هٰۤؤُلَآءِ  
 اِنْ كُنْتُمْ صٰدِقِيْنَ ۝

- 32 They said " Glory to Thee of  
     knowledge

٣٢- قَالُوْا سُبْحٰنَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَاۤ اِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا

47 It would seem that the angels though holy and pure and endued with power from God yet represented only one side of Creation. We may imagine them without passion or emotion of which the highest flower is love. If man was to be endued with emotions those emotions could lead him to the highest and drag him to the lowest. The power of will or choosing would have to go with them in order that man might steer his own bark. This power of will (when used aright) gave him to some extent a mastery over his own fortunes and over nature thus bringing him nearer to the God like nature which has supreme mastery and will. We may suppose the angels had no independent wills of their own their perfection in other ways reflected God's perfection but could not raise them to the dignity of vicegerency. The perfect vicegerent is he who has the power of initiative himself but whose independent action always reflects perfectly the will of his Principal. The distinction is expressed by Shakespeare (Sonnet 94) in those fine lines. They are the lords and owners of their faces Others but stewards of their excellence. The angels in their one sidedness saw only the mischief consequent on the misuse of the emotional nature by man perhaps they also being without emotions did not understand the whole of God's nature which gives and asks for love. In humility and true devotion to God they remonstrate we must not imagine the least tinge of jealousy as they are without emotion. This mystery of love being above them they are told that they do not know and they acknowledge (in 11 32 below) not their fault (for there is no question of fault) but their imperfection of knowledge. At the same time the matter is brought home to them when the actual capacities of man are shown to them (11 31, 33).

48. The literal words in Arabic throughout this passage are 'The names of things' which commentators take to mean the inner nature and qualities of things and things here would include feelings. The whole passage is charged with mystic meaning. The particular qualities or feelings which were outside the nature of angels were put by God into the nature of man. Man was thus able to love and understand love and thus plan and initiate as becomes the office of vicegerent. The angels acknowledged this. These things they could only know from the outside but they had faith or belief in the Unseen. And they knew that God saw all—what others see what others do not see, what others may even wish to conceal. Man has many qualities which are latent or which he may wish to suppress or conceal, to his own detriment.

We have none, save what Thou  
Hast taught us in truth it is Thou  
Who art perfect in knowledge and  
wisdom "

إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ

33 He said " O Adam ! tell them  
Their natures " When he had told  
them,

God said " Did I not tell you  
That I know the secrets of heaven  
And earth, and I know what ye  
reveal

And what ye conceal? "

۳۳- قَالَ يَادَا أَدَمُ أَخْبِرْهُمْ بِأَسْمَائِهِمْ فَلَمَّا  
أَسَاءَهُمْ بِأَسْمَائِهِمْ قَالَ أَلَمْ أَقُلْ لَّكُمْ إِنِّي  
أَعْلَمُ غَيْبَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَأَعْلَمُ مَا  
تُبْدُونَ وَمَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْتُمُونَ

34 And behold, We said to the angels  
" Bow down to Adam " and they  
bowed down  
Not so Iblis <sup>49</sup> he refused and was  
haughty  
He was of those who reject Faith

۳۴- وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ اسْجُدُوا لِآدَمَ  
فَسَجَدُوا إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ أَبَى وَاسْتَكْبَرَ وَكَانَ  
مِنَ الْكَافِرِينَ

35 ~~We~~ e said " O Adam ! dwell  
thou  
And thy wife in the Garden , <sup>50</sup>  
And eat of the bountiful things  
therein  
As (where and when) ye will , but  
approach not this tree,  
Or ye run into harm and  
transgression " <sup>51</sup>

۳۵- وَقُلْنَا يَادَا أَدَمُ اسْكُنْ أَنْتَ وَزَوْجُكَ  
الْجَنَّةَ وَكُلَا مِنْهَا رَعَدًا حَيْثُ شِئْتُمَا  
وَلَا تَقْرَبَا هَذِهِ الشَّجَرَةَ فَتَكُونَا مِنَ  
الظَّالِمِينَ

36 Then did Satan <sup>52</sup> make them slip  
From the (Garden), and get them  
out

۳۶- فَأَزَلَّهُمَا الشَّيْطَانُ عَنْهَا فَأَخْرَجَهُمَا

49 The Arabic may also be translated They bowed down except Iblis In that case Iblis (Satan) would be one of the angels But the theory of fallen angels is not usually accepted in Muslim theology In xviii 50 Iblis is spoken of as a Jinn We shall discuss later the meaning of this word

50 Was the Garden of Eden a place on this earth ? Obviously not For in verse 36 below, it was after the Fall that the sentence was pronounced On earth will be your dwelling place Before the Fall we must suppose Man to be on another plane altogether—of felicity innocence, trust a spiritual existence with the negation of enmity want of faith and all evil Perhaps Time and Space also did not exist and the Garden is allegorical as well as the tree The forbidden tree was not the tree of knowledge for man was given in that perfect state fuller knowledge than he has now (ii 31) it was the tree of Evil which he was forbidden not only to eat of but even to approach

51 'Zulm' in Arabic implies harm wrong injustice or transgression and may have reference to oneself, when the wrong is done to others it implies tyranny and oppression the idea of wrong naturally connects itself with darkness, which is another shade of meaning carried with the root word

52 Iblis in ii 34 is apparently the Power of Evil, with the root idea of desperateness or rebellion "Satan" in this verse is the Power of Evil with the root idea of perversity or enmity Note the appropriateness of the term on each occasion Also slipping from the Garden denotes the idea of Evil gradually tempting man from a higher to a lower state

Of the state (of felicity) in which  
They had been We said  
"Get ye down, all (ye people<sup>33</sup>),  
With enmity between yourselves  
On earth will be your dwelling-  
place  
And your means of livelihood<sup>34</sup>—  
For a time"

37 Then learnt Adam from his Lord  
Words of inspiration,<sup>35</sup> and his  
Lord  
Turned towards him, for He  
Is Oft-Returning, Most Merciful

38 We said "Get ye down all from  
here,  
And if, as is sure, there comes to you  
Guidance from Me,<sup>36</sup> whosoever  
Follows My guidance, on them  
Shall be no fear, nor shall they  
grieve

39 "But those who reject Faith  
And belie Our Signs,  
They shall be Companions of the  
Fire,  
They shall abide therein"<sup>37</sup>

وَمَا كَانُوا فِيهِ  
وَقُلْنَا اهْبِطُوا تَعْصِيَةً لِّبَعْضٍ عَدُوٍّ  
وَلَكُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ مُسْتَقَرٌّ وَمَتَاعٌ إِلَى  
حِينٍ ○

٣٧- فَتَلَوَّىٰ آدَمُ مِنْ رَبِّهِ كَلِمَاتٍ فَتَابَ  
عَلَيْهِ ۚ إِنَّهُ هُوَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ ○

٣٨- قُلْنَا اهْبِطُوا مِنْهَا جَمِيعًا  
فَأَمَّا يَا آدَمُ فَخُصِّي فَهْدَىٰ فَمَنْ تَبِعَهُ  
هُدًى وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ  
يَحْزَنُونَ ○

٣٩- وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَكَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا أُولَٰئِكَ  
أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ○

C 46 —Amongst men what nation had higher chances  
(11 40 86) In the realm of the Spirit than the Children of Israel?  
But again and again did they fail in the Spirit

53 God's decree is the result of man's action. Note the transition in Arabic from the singular number in 11 33 to the dual in 11 35 and the plural here which I have indicated in English by 'All ye people'. Evidently Adam is the type of all mankind and the sexes go together in all spiritual matters. Moreover the expulsion applied to Adam, Eve and Satan and the Arabic plural is appropriate for any number greater than two.

54 Man's sojourn in this lower state where he is partly an animal of this earth is for a time. But he must fulfil his lower duties also for they too are a part of his spiritual training.

55 As "names" in verse 31 above is used for the 'nature of things' so words here mean 'inspiration', spiritual knowledge. The Arabic word used for 'learn' here implies some effort on his part to which God's Grace responded.

The Arabic word for Repentance (*tauba*) means turning and the intensive word (*tauwāb*) for God's forgiveness (Oft Returning or Ever Returning) is from the same root. For repentance three things are necessary: the sinner must acknowledge his wrong, he must give it up and he must resolve to eschew it for the future. Man's nature is weak and he may have to return again and again for mercy. So long as he does it sincerely God is Oft Returning, Most Merciful. For his grace helps out the sinner's shortcomings.

56 Note the transition from the plural 'We' at the beginning of the verse to the singular 'Me' later in the same verse. God speaks of Himself usually in the first person plural 'We' it is the plural of respect and honour and is used in human language in Royal proclamations and decrees. But where a special personal relationship is expressed the singular 'I' or 'Me' is used. Cf. xxvi 52 etc.

In spite of Man's fall and in consequence of it assurance of guidance is given. In case man follows the guidance he is free from any fear for the present or the future, and any grief or sorrow for the past. The soul thus freed grows nearer to God.

57 But if the soul in spite of the Oft Returning Mercy of God rejects the higher light and goes on sinning against that light the inevitable consequence must be the spiritual Fire. It is not merely a fortuitous incident. As his rejection was deliberate and definite, so the consequences must be of an abiding character.



They rebelled against Moses and murmured  
In the wilderness, the Prophets they slew  
And the Signs they rejected, they falsified  
Scripture and turned their backs on righteousness

## SECTION 5

- 40 ❷ Children of Israel <sup>mind</sup> call to  
The (special) favour which I  
<sup>bestowed</sup>  
Upon you, and fulfil your  
<sup>Covenant</sup><sup>58</sup>  
With Me as I fulfil My Covenant  
With you, and fear none but Me

٢- يٰبَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ اذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتِيَ الَّتِي  
أَنْعَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَأَوْفُوا بِعَهْدِيْ أُوفِ  
بِعَهْدِكُمْ  
وَإِيَّائِي فَارْهَبُونِ ۝

- 41 And believe in what I reveal,<sup>59</sup>  
Confirming the revelation  
Which is with you,  
And be not the first to reject  
Faith therein, nor sell My Signs  
For a small price, and fear Me,  
And Me alone

٣- وَأٰمِنُوا بِمَا أَنزَلْتُ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا مَعَكُمْ  
وَلَا تَكُونُوا أَوَّلَ كَاذِبِيْهِ ۚ وَلَا تَشْتَرُوا  
بِآيَاتِيْ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا  
وَإِيَّائِي فَاتَّقُونِ ۝

- 42 And cover not Truth  
With falsehood, nor conceal  
The Truth when ye know  
(what it is)

٤- وَلَا تَكْتُمُوا الْحَقَّ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَتَكْتُمُوا  
الْحَقَّ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ۝

- 43 And be steadfast in prayer,  
Practise regular charity,  
And bow down your heads<sup>60</sup>  
With those who bow down  
(in worship)

٥- وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَارْكَعُوا  
مَعَ الرَّاكِعِينَ ۝

- 44 Do ye enjoin right conduct  
On the people, and forget  
(To practise it) yourselves,  
And yet ye study the Scripture?  
Will ye not understand?

٦- أَتَأْمُرُونَ النَّاسَ بِالْبِرِّ وَتَنْسَوْنَ  
أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ تَتْلُونَ الْكِتَابَ  
أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ۝

58 The appeal is made to Israel subjectively in terms of their own tradition. You claim to be a favoured nation. Have you forgotten My favours? You claim a special Covenant with Me. I have fulfilled My part of the Covenant by bringing you out of the land of bondage and giving you Canaan the land flowing with milk and honey. How have you fulfilled your part of the Covenant? Do you fear for your national existence? If you fear Me, nothing else will matter.

59 You received revelations before. Now comes one confirming it. Its first appeal should be to you. Are you to be the first to reject it? And reject it for what? God's Signs are worth more than all your paltry considerations. And the standard of duty and righteousness is to be taken from God and not from priests and customs.

60 The argument is still primarily addressed to the Jews but is of universal application, as in all the teachings of the Qur'ān. The chief feature of Jewish worship was and is the bowing of the head.



- 45 Nay, seek (God's) help  
With patient perseverance<sup>61</sup>  
And prayer  
It is indeed hard, except  
To those who bring a lowly  
spirit,—

٢٥- وَأَسْتَعِينُوا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلَاةِ وَإِنَّهَا  
لَكَيْدَةٌ إِلَّا عَلَى الْخَاشِعِينَ ۝

- 46 Who bear in mind the certainty  
That they are to meet their Lord,  
And that they are to return to him

٢٦- الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ أَنَّهُمْ مُلْقُوا رَبَّهُمْ وَ  
أَنَّهُمْ إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ ۝

#### SECTION 6

- 47 ۞ Children of Israel<sup>1</sup> call to  
mind  
The (special) favour which I  
bestowed  
Upon you,<sup>62</sup> and that I preferred  
you  
To all others (for My Message)

٢٧- يٰٓبَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ اذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتِيَ الَّتِي  
أَنْعَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَأَنِّي فَضَّلْتُكُمْ عَلَى  
الْعَالَمِينَ ۝

- 48 Then guard yourselves against a  
day  
When one soul shall not avail  
another,  
Nor shall intercession be accepted  
for her,  
Nor shall compensation be taken  
from her,  
Nor shall anyone be helped  
(from outside)<sup>63</sup>

٢٨- وَاتَّقُوا يَوْمًا لَا تَجْزِي نَفْسٌ عَنْ  
نَفْسٍ شَيْئًا  
وَلَا يَقْبَلُ مِنْهَا شَفَاعَةٌ  
وَلَا يُؤْخَذُ مِنْهَا عَدْلٌ  
وَلَا هُمْ يُنصَرُونَ ۝

- 49 And remember We delivered  
you  
From the people of Pharaoh they  
set you  
Hard tasks and punishments,  
slaughtered

٢٩- وَإِذْ بَجَّيْنَاكُمْ مِّنْ آلِ فِرْعَوْنَ يَسُومُونَكُمْ  
سُوًءَ الْعَذَابِ يُدَبِّحُونَ أَنَاءَكُمْ وَ  
يَسْتَعْجِلُونَ نِسَاءَكُمْ

61 The Arabic word *Sabr* implies many shades of meaning which it is impossible to comprehend in one English word. It implies (1) patience in the sense of being thorough not hasty (2) patient perseverance constancy steadfastness firmness of purpose (3) systematic as opposed to spasmodic or chance action (4) a cheerful attitude of resignation and understanding in sorrow defeat or suffering as opposed to murmuring or rebellion but saved from mere passivity or listlessness by the element of constancy or steadfastness

62 These words are recapitulated from II 40 which introduced a general account of God's favours to Israel now we are introduced to a particular account of incidents in Israel's history. Each incident is introduced by the Arabic word *Is*, which is indicated in the translation by 'Remember'

63 Before passing to particular incidents the conclusion is stated. Be on your guard do not think that special favours exempt you from the personal responsibility of each soul

Your sons and let your women-folk  
live,<sup>64</sup>  
Therein was a tremendous trial  
from your Lord

وَفِي ذَٰلِكُمْ بَلَاءٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ  
عَظِيمٌ

50 And remember We divided  
The Sea for you and saved you  
And drowned Pharaoh's people  
Within your very sight<sup>65</sup>

هـ- وَإِذْ فَرَقْنَا بِكُمُ الْبَحْرَ فَأَنْجَيْنَاكُمْ وَ  
أَغْرَقْنَا آلَ فِرْعَوْنَ وَأَنْتُمْ تُنْظَرُونَ

51 And remember we appointed  
Forty nights for Moses,<sup>66</sup>  
And in his absence ye took  
The calf (for worship),  
And ye did grievous wrong

هـ- وَإِذْ وَعَدْنَا مُوسَىٰ أَرْبَعِينَ لَيْلَةً ثُمَّ  
اتَّخَذْتُمُ الْعِجْلَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ  
وَأَنْتُمْ ظَالِمُونَ

52 Even then We did forgive you,<sup>67</sup>  
There was a chance for you  
To be grateful

هـ- ثُمَّ عَفَوْنَا عَنْكُمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ ذَٰلِكَ لَعَلَّكُمْ  
تَشْكُرُونَ

53 And remember We gave  
Moses the Scripture and the  
Criterion<sup>68</sup>

هـ- وَإِذْ آتَيْنَا مُوسَىٰ الْكِتَابَ وَالْفُرْقَانَ

64 The bondage of Egypt was indeed a tremendous trial. Even the Egyptians wish to spare the lives of Israel's females when the males were slaughtered; added to the bitterness of Israel. Their hatred was cruel but their love was still more cruel. About the hard task see Exod 1:14.

They made their lives bitter with hard bondage in mortar and in brick and in all manner of service in the field; all their service wherein they made them serve was with rigour. Pharaoh's taskmasters gave no straw yet ordered the Israelites to make bricks without straw. Exod v 5:19. Pharaoh's decree was: 'Every son that is born ye shall cast into the river and every daughter ye shall save alive.' Exod 1:22. It was in consequence of this decree that Moses was hidden three months after he was born and when he could be hidden no longer he was put into an ark of bulrushes and cast into the Nile where he was found by Pharaoh's daughter and wife (xxviii 9) and adopted into the family. Exod 11:2, 10. Cf xx 37-40. Thus Moses was brought up by the enemies of his people. He was chosen by God to deliver his people and God's wisdom made the learning and experience and even cruelties of the Egyptian enemies themselves to contribute to the salvation of his people.

65 When the Israelites at last escaped from Egypt they were pursued by Pharaoh and his host. By a miracle the Israelites crossed the Red Sea but the host of Pharaoh was drowned. Exod xiv 5:31.

66 This was after the Ten Commandments and the Laws and Ordinances had been given on Mount Sinai. Moses was asked up into the Mount and he was there forty days and forty nights. Exod xxiv 18. But the people got impatient of the delay made a calf of melted gold and offered worship and sacrifice to it. Exod xxxii 1:8.

67 Moses prayed for his people and God forgave them. This is the language of the Qur'ān. The Old Testament version is rougher. The Lord repented of the evil which He thought to do unto His people. Exod xxxii 1:4. The Muslim position has always been that the Jewish (and Christian) scriptures as they stand cannot be traced direct to Moses or Jesus but are later compilations. Modern scholarship and Higher Criticism has left no doubt on the subject. But the stories in these traditional books may be used in an appeal to those who use them; only they should be spiritualized as they are here and especially in 11:54 below.

68 God's revelation, the expression of God's Will, is the true standard of right and wrong. It may be in a Book or in God's dealings in history. All these may be called His Signs or Miracles. In this passage some commentators take the Scripture and the Criterion (Furqān) to be identical. Others take them to be two distinct things: Scripture being the written Book and the Criterion being other Signs. I agree with the latter view. The word Furqān also occurs in xxi 48 in connection with Moses and Aaron and in the first verse of Sūra xxv as well as in its title in connection with Muḥammad. As Aaron received no Book, Furqān must mean the other Signs. Muṣṭafā had both the Book and the other Signs; perhaps here too we take the other Signs as supplementing the Book. Cf Wordsworth's "Arbiter undisturbed of right and wrong" (Prelude, Book 4).

(Between right and wrong) there  
was  
A chance for you to be guided  
aright

لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ ○

54 And remember Moses said  
To his people " O my people !  
Ye have indeed wronged  
Yourselves by your worship of the  
calf  
So turn (in repentance) to your  
Maker,  
And slay yourselves (the  
wrong-doers) ,<sup>69</sup>  
That will be better for you  
In the sight of your Maker "  
Then He turned towards you (in  
forgiveness)  
For He is Oft-Returning, Most  
Merciful

٥٣- وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَى لِقَوْمِهِ يُقَوْمُوا إِنَّكُمْ  
طَلَمْتُمْ أَنْفُسَكُمْ بِاتِّخَاذِكُمُ الْعِجْلَ تَتُوبُوا  
إِلَىٰ بَارِئِكُمْ ۖ فَاقْتُلُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ  
ذَٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ عِنْدَ بَارِئِكُمْ  
فَتَابَ عَلَيْكُمْ  
إِنَّهُ هُوَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ ○

55 And remember ye said <sup>70</sup>  
"O Moses !  
We shall never believe in thee  
Until we see God manifestly,"  
But ye were dazed  
With thunder and lightning  
Even as ye looked on

٥٥- وَإِذْ قُلْتُمْ يُمُوسَىٰ لَنْ نُّؤْمِنَ لَكَ  
حَتَّىٰ نَرَىٰ اللَّهَ جَهْرَةً ۖ وَآخَذَتْكُمْ الضُّعْفَةُ  
وَأَنْتُمْ تَنْظُرُونَ ○

56 Then We raised you up  
After your death  
Ye had the chance  
To be grateful

٥٦- ثُمَّ بَعَثْنَاكُمْ مِن بَعْدِ مَوْتِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ  
تَشْكُرُونَ ○

57 And We gave you the shade of  
clouds

٥٧- وَطَلَّلْنَا عَلَيْكُمُ الْغَمَامَ وَأَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكُمْ

69 Moses's speech may be construed literally as translated in which case it reproduces Exod xxxii 27 28 but in a much softened form for the Old Testament says Go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp and slay every man his brother and every man his companion and every man his neighbour and there fell of the people that day 3 000 men A more spiritualized version would be that the order for slaying was given by way of trial but was withdrawn for God turned to them in forgiveness A still more spiritualized way of construing it would be to take 'anfusakum' as meaning souls not selves Then the sense of Moses's speech (abbreviated) would be 'By the worship of the calf you have wronged your own souls, repent mortify (=slay) your souls now it will be better in the sight of God'

The word here translated Maker [*Bārī*] has also in it a touch of the root meaning of " liberator, — an apt word as referring to the Israelites who had just been liberated from bondage in Egypt

70 We have hitherto had instances from the Jewish traditional *Taurāt* (or Pentateuch) Now we have some instances from Jewish traditions in the Talmud or body of exposition in the Jewish theological schools They are based on the Jewish scriptures but add many marvellous details and homilies As to seeing God we have in Exod xxxiii 20 And He said Thou canst not see my face for there shall no man see me and live The punishment for insisting on seeing God was therefore death but those who rejected faith were forgiven, and yet they were ungrateful

And sent down to you  
Manna<sup>71</sup> and quails, saying  
"Eat of the good things  
We have provided for you "  
(But they rebelled),  
To Us they did no harm,  
But they harmed their own souls

- 58 **A**nd remember We said  
"Enter this town,"<sup>72</sup> and eat  
Of the plenty therein  
As ye wish, but enter  
The gate with humility,  
In posture and in words,  
And We shall forgive you your  
faults  
And increase (the portion of)  
Those who do good "

- 59 But the transgressors  
Changed the word from that  
Which had been given them,  
So We sent on the transgressors  
A plague from heaven,  
For that they infringed  
(Our command) repeatedly

### SECTION 7

- 60 **A**nd remember Moses prayed  
For water for his people,  
We said "Strike the rock  
With thy staff" Then gushed  
forth

الْمَنِّ وَالسَّلَوى  
كُلُوا مِنْ طَيِّبَاتِ مَا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ  
وَمَا ظَلَمُونَا وَلَكِنْ كَانُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ ٥٧

٥٨- وَإِذْ قُلْنَا ادْخُلُوا هَذِهِ الْقَرْيَةَ  
مَكُلُوا مِنْهَا حَيْثُ شِئْتُمْ رَغَدًا وَادْخُلُوا  
الْبَابَ سَبْعًا وَاقُولُوا حِطَّةٌ تُعْفِرْ لَكُمْ  
خَطِيئَتَكُمْ  
وَسَنَزِيدُ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ٥٩

٥٩- فَكَذَّلَ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا قَوْلًا غَيْرَ الَّذِي  
قِيلَ لَهُمْ فَأَنزَلْنَا عَلَى الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا رِجْزًا  
مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ بِمَا كَانُوا يَفْسُقُونَ ٦٠

٦- وَإِذِ اسْتَسْقَى مُوسَى لِقَوْمِهِ فَقُلْنَا  
اصْرَبْ بِعَصَاكَ الْحَجَرَ فَانْفَجَرَتْ مِنْهُ

71 Manna=Hebrew *Man hu* Arabic *Mā huwa* ?=What is it? In Exod xvi 14 it is described as a small round thing as small as the hoar frost on the ground. It usually rotted if left over till next day, it melted in the hot sun. The amount necessary for each man was about an Omer a Hebrew measure of capacity equal to about 2½ quarts. This is the Hebrew account probably distorted by traditional exaggeration. The actual Manna found to this day in the Sinai region is a gummy saccharine secretion found on a species of Tamarisk. It is produced by the puncture of a species of insect like the cochineal just as lac is produced by the puncture of the lac insect on certain trees in India. As to quails large flights of them are driven by winds in the Eastern Mediterranean in certain seasons of the year as was witnessed during the Great War of 1914-18 by many Indian officers who campaigned between Egypt and Palestine.

72 This probably refers to Shittim. It was the 'town of acacias' just east of the Jordan where the Israelites were guilty of debauchery and the worship of and sacrifices to false gods (Num xxv 12 also 89), a terrible punishment ensued including the plague of which 24,000 died. The word which the transgressors changed may have been a pass word. In the Arabic text it is 'Hijlatun' which implies humility and a prayer of forgiveness a fitting emblem to distinguish them from their enemies. From this particular incident a more general lesson may be drawn in the hour of triumph we are to behave humbly as in God's sight and our conduct should be exemplary according to God's word otherwise our arrogance will draw its own punishment.

These verses, 58-59 may be compared with vii 161-62. There are two verbal differences. Here (ii 58) we have *enter the town* and in vii 161 we have *dwell in this town*. Again in ii 59 here we have *infringed (Our command)*, and in vii 162, we have *transgressed*. The verbal differences make no difference to the sense.

Therefrom twelve springs  
Each group<sup>73</sup> knew its own place  
For water So eat and drink  
Of the sustenance provided by God,  
And do no evil nor mischief  
On the (face of the) earth

اِثْنَتَا عَشْرَةَ عَيْنًا قَدْ عَلِمَ كُلُّ اُنَاسٍ  
مَشْرِبَهُمْ كُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا مِنْ رِزْقِ اللَّهِ وَ  
لَا تَعْتُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ مُفْسِدِينَ ۝

61 And remember ye said  
"O Moses! we cannot endure  
One kind of food (always),  
So beseech thy Lord for us  
To produce for us of what the  
earth  
Groweth,—its pot-herbs, and  
cucumbers,  
Its garlic, lentils, and onions"  
He said "Will ye exchange  
The better for the worse?  
Go ye down to any town,"  
And ye shall find what ye want!"

٦١- وَإِذْ قُلْتُمْ يَنُوسَىٰ لَن تَصُبِرَ عَلٰى  
طَعَامٍ وَاحِدٍ فَادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُخْرِجْ لَنَا  
مِمَّا تُثْمِرُ الْأَرْضُ مِنْ بَقْلِهَا وَقِثَّائِهَا  
وَفُومِهَا وَعَدَسِيهَا وَبَصِلًا قَالَ آتَتْكَ آيَاتُنَا  
الَّذِى هُوَ أَدْنٰى يٰأَلِىَّ هُوَ خَيْرٌ  
إِهْبِطُوا مِصْرًا فَإِنَّ لَكُم مَّا سَأَلْتُمْ

73 Here we have a reference to the tribal organisation of the Jews which played a great part in their forty years march through the Arabian deserts (Num 1 and 11) and their subsequent settlement in the land of Canaan (Joshua xiii and xiv). The twelve tribes were derived from the sons of Jacob whose name was changed to Israel (soldier of God) after he had wrestled says Jewish tradition with God (Genesis xxxii 28). Israel had twelve sons (Gen xxxv 22-26) including Levi and Joseph. The descendants of these twelve sons were the Children of Israel. Levi's family got the priesthood and the care of the Tabernacle; they were exempted from military duties for which the census was taken (Num 1 47-53) and therefore from the distribution of land in Canaan (Josh xiv 3); they were distributed among all the tribes and were really a privileged caste and not numbered among the tribes. Moses and Aaron belonged to the house of Levi. On the other hand Joseph on account of the high position to which he rose in Egypt as the Pharaoh's minister was the progenitor of two tribes, one in the name of each of his two sons Ephraim and Manasseh. Thus there were twelve tribes in all as Levi was cut out and Joseph represented two tribes. Their having fixed stations and watering places in camp and fixed territorial areas later in the Promised Land prevented confusion and mutual jealousies and is pointed to as an evidence of the Providence of God acting through His prophet Moses. Cf also vii 160.

The gushing of twelve springs from a rock evidently refers to a local tradition well known to Jews and Arabs in Mustafā's time. Near Horeb close to Mount Sinai where the law was given to Moses is a huge mass of red granite twelve feet high and about fifty feet in circumference where European travellers (e.g. Breydenbach in the 15th Century after Christ) saw abundant springs of water twelve in number (see Sale's notes on this passage). It existed in Mustafā's time and may still exist to the present day for anything we know to the contrary. The Jewish tradition would be based on Exod xvii 6: "Thou shalt smite the rock and there shall come water out of it that the people may drink."

The story is used as a parable as is clear from the latter part of the verse. In the desolation and among the rocks of this life people grumble. But they will not be left starving or thirsty of spiritual life. God's Messenger can provide abundant spiritual sustenance even from such unpromising things as the hard rocks of life. And all the nations can be grouped round it each different yet each in perfect order and discipline. We are to use with gratitude all spiritual food and drink provided by God and He sometimes provides from unexpected places. We must restrain ourselves from mischief, pride, and every kind of evil for our higher life is based on our probation on this very earth.

74 The declension of the word *Misr* in the Arabic text here shows that it is treated as a common noun meaning any town but this is not conclusive and the reference may be to the Egypt of Pharaoh. The *Tanwin* expressing indefiniteness may mean any Egypt i.e. any country as fertile as Egypt. There is here a subtle reminiscence as well as a severe reproach. The rebellious children of Israel murmured at the sameness of the food they got in the desert. They were evidently hankering after the delicacies of the Egypt which they had left although they should have known that the only thing certain for them in Egypt was their bondage and harsh treatment. Moses's reproach to them was two-fold: (1) Such variety of foods you can get in any town would you for their sake, sell your freedom? Is not freedom better than delicate food? (2) In front is the rich Promised Land which you are reluctant to march to, behind is Egypt, the land of bondage. Which is better? Would you exchange the better for the worse?

They were covered with  
humiliation<sup>75</sup>  
And misery, they drew  
On themselves the wrath of God  
This because they went on  
Rejecting the Signs of God  
And slaying His Messengers  
Without just cause  
This because they rebelled  
And went on transgressing

وَضُرِبَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الذِّلَّةُ وَالْمَسْكَنَةُ  
وَبَاءُوا بِغَضَبٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ  
ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا يَكْفُرُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ  
وَيَقْتُلُونَ النَّبِيِّينَ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ  
ذَلِكَ بِمَا عَصَوْا وَكَانُوا يَعْتَدُونَ

### SECTION 8

62 Those who believe (in the  
Qur-ān),  
And those who follow the Jewish  
(scriptures),  
And the Christians and the  
Sabians,<sup>6</sup>—  
Any who believe in God  
And the Last Day,  
And work righteousness,  
Shall have their reward

۞-۶۲ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا  
وَالنَّصَارَى وَالصَّابِئِينَ  
مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ  
وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا  
فَلَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ

75 From here the argument becomes more general. They got the Promised Land. But they continued to rebel against God. And their humiliation and misery became a national disaster. They were carried in captivity to Assyria. They were restored under the Persians but still remained under the Persian yoke and they were under the yoke of the Greeks the Romans and Arabs. They were scattered all over the earth and have been a wandering people ever since because they rejected faith, slew God's messengers and went on transgressing.

The slaying of the Prophets begins with the murder of Abel who was in the ancestry of Israel. The elder sons of Jacob attempted the murder of Joseph when they dropped him into the well and if he was afterwards rescued by strangers their blood guilt was none the less. In later history they attempted to slay Jesus inasmuch as they got the Roman Governor to crucify one in his likeness and they attempted to take the life of Mustafā.

But the moral goes wider than the Children of Israel. It applies to all nations and all individuals. If they are stiff-necked if they set a greater value on perishable goods than on freedom and eternal salvation if they break the law of God and resist His grace their portion must be humiliation and misery in the spiritual world and probably even on this earth if a long view is taken.

76 Latest researches have revealed a small remnant of a religious community numbering about 2,000 souls in Lower Irāq near Basra. In Arabic they are called *Ṣubbī* (plural *Ṣubbā*). They are also called Sabians and Nasoræans or Mandæans or Christians of St John. They claim to be Gnostics or Knowers of the Great Life. They dress in white and believe in frequent immersions in water. Their Book *Ginza* is in a dialect of Aramaic. They have theories of Darkness and Light as in Zoroastrianism. They use the name *Yardān* (Jordan) for any river. They live in peace and harmony among their Muslim neighbours. They resemble the *Ṣābi ūn* mentioned in the Qur-ān but are not probably identical with them.

The pseudo Sabians of Ḥarrān who attracted the attention of Khalifa Mamūn al Rashīd in 830 A.D. by their long hair and peculiar dress probably adopted the name as it was mentioned in the Qur-ān in order to claim the privileges of the People of the Book. They were Syrian Star worshippers with Hellenistic tendencies like the Jews contemporary with Jesus. It is doubtful whether they had any right to be called People of the Book in the technical sense of the term. But I think that in this matter (though many authorities would dissent) the term can be extended by analogy to cover earnest followers of Zoroaster the Vedas Buddha Confucius and other Teachers of the moral law.

There was another people called the Sabæans who played an important part in the history of early Arabia, and are known through their inscriptions in an alphabet allied to the Phœnician and the Babylonian. They had a flourishing kingdom in the Yemen tract in South Arabia about 800-700 B.C. though their origin may have been in North Arabia. They worshipped the planets and stars (Moon, Sun, Venus). Probably the Queen of Sheba is connected with them. They succumbed to Abyssinia about 350 A.D. and to Persia about 579 A.D. Their capital was near Ṣan-ā. They had beautiful stone buildings, in which the pointed arch is noticeable. (See E. B. on Sabæans.)

With their Lord on them  
Shall be no fear, nor shall they  
grieve ”

63 And remember We took  
Your Covenant  
And We raised above you  
(The towering height)  
Of Mount (Sinai) ”<sup>78</sup>  
(Saying) “ Hold firmly  
To what We have given you  
And bring (ever) to remembrance  
What is therein  
Perchance ye may fear God ”

64 But ye turned back thereafter  
Had it not been for the Grace  
And Mercy of God to you,  
Ye had surely been  
Among the lost

65 And well ye knew  
Those amongst you  
Who transgressed  
In the matter of the Sabbath  
We said to them  
“ Be ye apes,  
Despised and rejected ” ”

66 So We made it an example  
To their own time

وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ○

٦٣- وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَكُمْ وَرَفَعْنَا فَوْقَكُمُ  
الطُّورَ

خُذُوا مَا آتَيْنَاكُمْ بِقُوَّةٍ  
وَادْكُرُوا مَا فِيهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ○

٦٤- ثُمَّ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ مِمَّنْ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فَلَوْلَا  
فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ لَكُنْتُمْ  
مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ ○

٦٥- وَلَقَدْ عَلِمْتُمُ الَّذِينَ اعْتَدَوْا مِنْكُمْ  
فِي السَّبْتِ فَقُلْنَا لَهُمْ  
كُونُوا قِرَدَةً خَاسِئِينَ ○

٦٦- فَجَعَلْنَاهَا نَكَالًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهَا وَمَا

77 Cf 11 38 where the same phrase occurs And it recurs again and again afterwards The point of the verse is that Islam does not teach an exclusive doctrine and is not meant exclusively for one people The Jews claimed this for themselves and the Christians in their origin were a sect of the Jews Even the modern organized Christian churches though they have been consciously or unconsciously influenced by the Time spirit including the historical fact of Islam yet cling to the idea of Vicarious Atonement which means that all who do not believe in it or who lived previously to the death of Christ are at a disadvantage spiritually before the Throne of God The attitude of Islam is entirely different Islam existed before the preaching of Muḥammad on this earth the Qur ān expressly calls Abraham a Muslim (111 67) Its teaching (submission to God's will) has been and will be the teaching of Religion for all time and for all peoples

78 The Mountain of Sinai (*Tūr u Sīnā*) a prominent mountain in the Arabian desert in the peninsula between the two arms of the Red Sea Here the Ten Commandments and the Law were given to Moses Hence it is now called the Mountain of Moses (*Jabal Mūsa*) The Israelites encamped at the foot of it for nearly a year The Covenant was taken from them under many portents (Exod xix 5 8 16 18) which are described in Jewish tradition in great detail Under thunder and lightning the mountain must indeed have appeared an awe inspiring sight above to the Camp at its foot And the people solemnly entered into the Covenant all the people answered together and said All that the Lord hath spoken we will do

79 The punishment for breach of the Sabbath under the Mosaic law was death 'Every one that defileth it (the Sabbath) shall surely be put to death for whosoever doeth any work therein that soul shall be cut off from among his people' (Exod xxxi 14) There must have been a Jewish tradition about a whole fishing community in a seaside town which persisted in breaking the Sabbath and were turned into apes cf vii 163 166 Or should we translate in both these passages Be as apes instead of Be apes This is the suggestion of Maulvi Muḥammad Ali on this passage on the authority of Mujāhid and Ibn Jarīr Ṭabarī The punishment would be, not for the breach of the Sabbath in itself, but for their contumacious defiance of the Law



And to their posterity,  
And a lesson  
To those who fear God

- 67 And remember Moses said  
To his people "God commands  
That ye sacrifice a heifer" <sup>80</sup>  
They said "Makest thou  
A laughing-stock of us?"  
He said "God save me  
From being an ignorant (fool)!"

- 68 They said "Beseech on our  
behalf  
Thy Lord to make plain to us  
What (heifer) it is!"  
He said "He says the heifer  
Should be neither too old  
Nor too young, but of middling  
Age now do what ye are  
commanded!"

- 69 They said "Beseech on our  
behalf  
Thy Lord to make plain to us  
Her colour" He said "He says  
A fawn-coloured heifer,  
Pure and rich in tone,  
The admiration of beholders!"

- 70 They said "Beseech on our  
behalf  
Thy Lord to make plain to us  
What she is to us are all heifers  
Alike we wish indeed for guidance,  
If God wills"

حَلَفَهَا وَمَوْعِظَةً لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ ○

٦٧- وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ  
يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تَذْبَحُوا بَقْرَةً ۚ قَالُوا اتَّخَذْنَا  
هَٰذَا هُزُوًا ۚ قَالَ أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ أَنْ أَكُونَ مِنَ  
الْجَاهِلِينَ ○

٦٨- قَالُوا ادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُبَيِّنْ لَنَا مَا هِيَ  
قَالَ إِنَّهُ يَقُولُ إِنَّهَا بَقْرَةٌ لَا فَائِضٌ وَلَا  
يَكْرُ ۚ  
عَوْنٌ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ ۚ  
فَانْعَلُوا مَا تُؤْمُرُونَ ○

٦٩- قَالُوا ادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُبَيِّنْ لَنَا مَا لَوْنُهَا  
قَالَ إِنَّهُ يَقُولُ إِنَّهَا بَقْرَةٌ صَفْرَاءُ فَاقِفْ  
لَوْنُهَا تَسُرُّ النَّاظِرِينَ ○

٧٠- قَالُوا ادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُبَيِّنْ لَنَا مَا هِيَ  
إِنَّ الْبَقَرَ تَشَابَهَ عَلَيْنَا  
وَأِنَّا إِن شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَمُهْتَدُونَ ○

<sup>80</sup> This story or parable of the heifer in ii 67 71 should be read with the parable of the dead man brought to life in ii 72 73. The stories were accepted in Jewish traditions which are themselves based on certain sacrificial directions in the Old Testament. The heifer story of Jewish tradition is based on Num xix 1 10 in which Moses and Aaron ordered the Israelites to sacrifice a red heifer without spot or blemish her body was to be burnt and the ashes were to be kept for the purification of the congregation from sin. The parable of the dead man we shall refer to later.

The lesson of the heifer parable is plain. Moses announced the sacrifice to the Israelites and they treated it as a jest. When Moses continued solemnly to ask for the sacrifice they put him off on one pretext and another asking a number of questions which they could have answered themselves if they had listened to Moses's directions. Their questions were carping criticisms rather than the result of a desire for information. It was a mere thin pretence that they were genuinely seeking for guidance. When at last they were driven into a corner, they made the sacrifice but the will was wanting which would have made the sacrifice efficacious for purification from sin. The real reason for their prevarications was their guilty conscience as we see in the parable of the dead man (ii, 72 73).



- 71 He said " He says a heifer  
Not trained to till the soil  
Or water the fields, sound  
And without blemish " They said  
" Now hast thou brought  
The truth " Then they offered  
Her in sacrifice,  
But not with good-will

## SECTION 9

- 72 **R**emember ye slew a man <sup>81</sup>  
And fell into a dispute  
Among yourselves as to the crime  
But God was to bring forth  
What ye did hide

- 73 So We said " Strike the (body)  
With a piece of the (heifer) "  
Thus God bringeth the dead  
To life and showeth you His <sup>Signs</sup>  
Perchance ye may understand

- 74 **T**henceforth were your hearts  
Hardened they became  
Like a rock and even worse  
In hardness For among rocks  
There are some from which  
Rivers gush forth, others  
There are which when split  
Asunder send forth water,  
And others which sink

٤١- قَالَ إِنَّهُ يَقُولُ إِنَّهَا بَقَرَةٌ لَا ذَلُولَ تُثِيرُ  
الْأَرْضَ وَلَا تَسْقِي الْحَرْثَ مُسَلَّمَةٌ لَا  
شِيَةَ فِيهَا قَالُوا النَّ جئتُ بِالْحَقِّ مَذْجُوهَا  
وَمَا كَادُوا يَفْعَلُونَ ۖ

٤٢- وَإِذْ قَتَلْتُمْ نَفْسًا فَادَرَأْتُمُ فِيهَا  
وَاللَّهُ مُخْرِجٌ مَّا كُنتُمْ تَكْتُمُونَ ۝

٤٣- قُلْنَا اضْرِبُوهُ بِبَعْضِهَا  
كَذَلِكَ يُخَيِّ اللَّهُ الْمَوْتَى  
وَيُرِيكُمْ آيَاتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ۝

٤٤- ثُمَّ قَسَتْ قُلُوبُكُمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ  
فَهِيَ كَالْجِبَارَةِ أَوْ أَنتُمْ قَسَوُاْ وَإِنَّ مِّنَ  
الْجِبَارَةِ لَمَّا يَتَنَفَّسُ مِنْهُ الْأَنْهَارُ وَإِنَّ  
مِنْهَا لَمَّا يَشْقُقُ فَيَجْرُ مِنْهُ الْمَاءُ ۖ وَ  
إِنَّ مِنْهَا لَمَّا يَلْهَيْطُ مِنْ خَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ ۖ وَ

81 In Deut xx: 19 it is ordained that if the body of a slain man be found in a field and the slayer is not known a heifer shall be beheaded, and the elders of the city next to the slain man's domicile shall wash their hands over the heifer and say that they neither did the deed nor saw it done thus clearing themselves from the blood guilt

The Jewish story based on this was that in a certain case of this kind every one tried to clear himself of guilt and lay the blame at the door of others In the first place they tried to prevaricate and prevent a heifer being slain as in the last parable When she was slain God by a miracle disclosed the really guilty person A portion of the sacrificed heifer was ordered to be placed on the corpse, which came to life and disclosed the whole story of the crime

The lesson of this parable is that men may try to hide their crimes individually or collectively but God will bring them to light in unexpected ways Applying this further to Jewish national history the argument is developed in the following verses that the Children of Israel played fast and loose with their own rites and traditions, but they could not thus evade the consequences of their own sin

For fear of God And God is  
Not unmindful of what ye do <sup>82</sup>

مَا اللَّهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ○

- 75 Can ye (O ye men of Faith)  
Entertain the hope that they  
Will believe in you? —  
Seeing that a party of them  
Heard the word of God,  
And perverted it knowingly  
After they understood it

هـ- اِفْتَضِعُوا اَنْ يُؤْمِنُوا لَكُمْ وَقَدْ كَانَ  
فَرِيقٌ مِنْهُمْ يَسْمَعُونَ كَلِمَ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ  
يُحَرِّفُونَهُ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا عَقَلُوهُ وَهُمْ  
يَعْلَمُونَ ○

- 76 Behold! when they meet <sup>83</sup>  
The men of Faith, they say  
"We believe" but when  
They meet each other in private,  
They say "Shall you tell them  
What God hath revealed to you,  
That they may engage you  
In argument about it  
Before your Lord?" —  
Do ye not understand (their aim)?

وَاِذَا لَقُوا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا قَالُوْا اٰمَنَّا وَاِذَا خَلَا نَعْصُهُمْ اِلٰى بَعْضٍ قَالُوْا اَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَّكُمْ  
بِمَا فَتَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمْ لِيُحَاجُّوْكُمْ بِهِ عِنْدَ  
رَبِّكُمْ  
اَفَلَا تَعْقِلُوْنَ ○

- 77 Know they not that God  
Knoweth what they conceal  
And what they reveal?

وَمَا يَعْلَمُوْنَ اَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا يُرْسُوْنَ  
وَمَا يُعْلِنُوْنَ ○

82 The sinners heart gets harder and harder It is even harder than rocks of which a beautiful poetical allegory is placed before us In nature we think there is nothing harder than rocks But there are rocks that weep voluntarily like repentant hearts that come to God of their own accord such are the rocks from which rivers and springs flow spontaneously sometimes in small trickles sometimes in big volumes Then there are rocks which have to be split or dug into or blown up with dynamite and underneath we find abundant waters as in wells beneath rocky soil Such are the hearts of a less degree of fineness which yet melt into tears when some great blow or calamity calls the mind to higher things And lastly there are the rocks which slip or sink by geological pressure or in an earthquake and send forth large spouts of water as happened for example in the Bihar earthquake of 1934 such sinking or quaking may be poetically ascribed to fear So there are hearts which will come to God by no higher motive than fear but yet fear will melt them into tears of repentance But the hardened sinner is worse than all these His case is worse than that of rocks for nothing will melt him

83 The immediate argument applies to the Jews of Medina but the more general argument applies to the people of Faith and the people without Faith as we shall see below If the Muslims of Medina ever entertained the hope that the Jews in their city would as a body welcome Muḥammad Muṣṭafā as the prophet prophesied in their own books they were mistaken In Deut xviii 18 they read I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren like unto thee (i.e. like unto Moses) which was interpreted by some of their doctors as referring to Muḥammad and they came into Islam The Arabs are a kindred branch of the Semitic family and are correctly described in relation to the Jews as their brethren, and there is no question that there was not another Prophet like unto Moses until Muḥammad came in fact the postscript of Deuteronomy which was written many centuries after Moses says There arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses whom the Lord knew face to face But the Jews as a body were jealous of Muḥammad and played a double part When the Muslim community began to grow stronger they pretended to be of them but really tried to keep back any knowledge of their own Scriptures from them, lest they should be beaten by their own arguments

The more general interpretation holds good in all ages Faith and Unfaith are pitted against each other Faith has to struggle against power position organization, and privilege When it gains ground, Unfaith comes forward insincerely and claims fellowship But in its own mind it is jealous of the armoury of science and knowledge which Faith brings into the service of God But God knows all and if the people of Faith will only seek knowledge sincerely wherever they can find it,—even as far afield as China, as Muḥammad said, they can defeat Unfaith on its own ground.

- 78 And there are among them<sup>84</sup>  
 Illiterates, who know not the Book,  
 But (see therein their own) desires,  
 And they do nothing but  
 conjecture

٤٨- وَ مِنْهُمْ أُمِّيُونَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ الْكِتَابَ  
 إِلَّا أَمَانٍ وَإِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا يَظُنُّونَ ○

- 79 'Then woe to those who write  
 The Book with their own hands,  
 And then say "This is from God,"  
 To traffic with it  
 For a miserable price!—  
 Woe to them for what their hands  
 Do write, and for the gain  
 They make thereby

٤٩- قَوْلٍ لِلَّذِينَ يَكْتُبُونَ الْكِتَابَ بِأَيْدِيهِمْ  
 ثُمَّ يَقُولُونَ هَذَا مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ لِيَسْتَرَوْا بِهِ  
 ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا قَوْلٍ لَهُمْ مِمَّا كَتَبَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ  
 وَوَنَلَّ لَهُمْ مِمَّا يَكْسِبُونَ ○

- 80 And they say "The Fire<sup>85</sup>  
 Shall not touch us  
 But for a few numbered days "  
 Say "Have ye taken a promise  
 From God, for He never  
 Breaks His promise?  
 Or is it that ye say of God  
 What ye do not know?"

٥٠- وَقَالُوا لَنْ تَمَسَّنَا النَّارُ إِلَّا أَيَّامًا مَعْدُودَةً  
 قُلْ أَتَأْخُذُكُمْ عِندَ اللَّهِ عَهْدًا فَلَنْ تُخْلَفَ  
 اللَّهُ عَهْدَهُ أَمْ تَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ مَا لَا  
 تَعْلَمُونَ ○

- 81 Nay, those who seek gain<sup>86</sup>  
 In Evil, and are girt round  
 By their sins,—  
 They are Companions of the Fire  
 Therein shall they abide  
 (For ever)

٥١- نَالَى مَنْ كَسَتْ سَيِّئَةٌ وَ أَحَاطَتْ بِهِ  
 حَاطَّتُهُ فَأُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ  
 هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ○

- 82 But those who have faith  
 And work righteousness,

٥٢- وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ

84 The argument of 1 76 is continued The Jews wanted to keep back knowledge but what knowledge had they? Many of them even if they could read were no better than illiterates for they knew not their own true Scriptures but read into them what they wanted or at best their own conjectures They palmed off their own writings for the Message of God Perhaps it brought them profit for the time being but it was a miserable profit if they gained the whole world and lost their own souls (Matt xvi 26) Writing with their own hands means inventing books themselves, which had no divine authority

The general argument is similar Unfaith erects its own false gods It attributes things to causes which only exist in its own imagination Sometimes it even indulges in actual dishonest traffic in the ignorance of the multitude It may pay for a time but the bubble always bursts

85 The Jews in their arrogance might say Whatever the terror of Hell may be for other people our sins will be forgiven because we are the children of Abraham at worst we shall suffer a short definite punishment and then be restored to the bosom of Abraham This bubble is pricked here Read this verse with 11 81 82

The general application is also clear If Unfaith claims some special prerogative such as race civilisation political power historical experience, and so on these will not avail in God's sight His promise is sure, but His promise is for those who seek God in Faith and show it in their conduct

86 This is many degrees worse than merely falling into evil it is going out to "earn evil" as the Arabic text has it, i.e. to seek gain in evil Such a perverse attitude means that the moral and spiritual fortress erected around us by the Grace of God is voluntarily surrendered by us and demolished by Evil, which erects its own fortress, so that access to Good may be more and more difficult.

They are Companions of the  
Garden  
Therein shall they abide  
(For ever)

### SECTION 10

- 83 And remember We took<sup>87</sup>  
A Covenant from the Children  
Of Israel (to this effect)  
Worship none but God,  
Treat with kindness  
Your parents and kindred,  
And orphans and those in need,  
Speak fair to the people,  
Be steadfast in prayer,  
And practise regular charity  
Then did ye turn back,  
Except a few among you,  
And ye backslide (even now)

- 84 And remember We took<sup>88</sup>  
Your Covenant (to this effect)  
Shed no blood amongst you,  
Nor turn out your own people  
From your homes and this  
Ye solemnly ratified,  
And to this ye can bear witness

- 85 After this it is ye, the same people,  
Who slay among yourselves,  
And banish a party of you  
From their homes, assist  
(Their enemies) against them,  
In guilt and rancour,  
And if they come to you  
As captives, ye ransom<sup>89</sup> them,

أُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْجَنَّةِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ

۸۳- وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَ بَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ لَا  
تَعْبُدُونَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ ۖ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا  
وَبِذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَ  
قُولُوا لِلنَّاسِ حُسْنًا ۚ وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَ  
آتُوا الزَّكَاةَ ۚ ثُمَّ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِّنْكُمْ  
وَأَنْتُمْ مُّعْرِضُونَ ۝

۸۴- وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَكُمْ لَا تَسْفِكُونَ  
دِمَاءَكُمْ وَلَا تُخْرِجُونَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ مِّنْ  
دِيَارِكُمْ ثُمَّ أَقْرَرْتُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ شَاهِدُونَ ۝

۸۵- ثُمَّ أَنْتُمْ هَؤُلَاءِ تَقْتُلُونَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَ  
تُخْرِجُونَ فِرْيَقًا مِّنْكُمْ مِّنْ دِيَارِهِمْ تَظَاهَرُونَ  
عَلَيْهِمْ بِالْأَكْثَمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ ۚ وَإِنْ  
يَأْتُوَكُمْ أَسْرَىٰ تَعْدُوهُمْ ۚ

87 So far from the Covenant being of the kind you suggest in u 80 the real Covenant is about the moral law which is set out in u 83 This moral law is universal and if you break it no privileges will lighten your punishment or help you in any way (u 86) Speak fair to the people not only means outward courtesy from the leaders to the meanest among the people but the protection of the people from being exploited deceived defrauded or doped with things to lull their intelligence

88 Verse 83 referred to the universal moral law This verse 84 refers to its application under a special Covenant entered into with the Jews of Medina by the new born Muslim Commonwealth under its Guide and teacher Muhammad This Covenant is given in Ibn Hishām's *Sirāt al-Rasūl* and comments on it will be found in Ameer Ali's *Spirit of Islam* (London 1922) pp 57-61 It was entered into in the second year of the Hijra and was treacherously broken by the Jews almost immediately afterwards

89 I understand 'ransom them here to mean take ransom for them though most of the Commentators take it to mean give ransom for them Mustafā had made a Pact which if it had been faithfully observed by all parties would have brought a reign of law and order for Medina But some of the treacherous Jews never intended to observe its terms They fought and slew each other and not only banished those who were obnoxious to them but intrigued with their enemies If by any chance they came back into their hands as captives they demanded ransom for them to return to their homes although they had no right to banish them at all If we understand by ransom them pay ransom for them to release them from the hands of their enemies it would mean that they did this pious act for show although they were themselves the authors of their unlawful banishment I think the former makes better sense

Though it was not lawful  
For you to banish them  
Then is it only a part of the Book  
That ye believe in,  
And do ye reject the rest?  
But what is the reward for those  
Among you who behave like this  
But disgrace in this life?—  
And on the Day of Judgment  
They shall be consigned  
To the most grievous penalty  
For God is not unmindful  
Of what ye do

- 86 These are the people who buy  
The life of this world at the price  
Of the Hereafter their penalty  
Shall not be lightened,  
Nor shall they be helped

وَهُوَ مُحَرَّمٌ عَلَيْكُمْ إِخْرَاجُهُمْ  
أَفْتُوهُم مِّنْ بَعْضِ الْكِتَابِ وَتَكْفُرُونَ  
بِبَعْضٍ فَمَا جَزَاءُ مَنْ يَفْعَلُ ذَلِكَ مِنْكُمْ  
إِلَّا خِزْيٌ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ  
يُرَدُّونَ إِلَىٰ أَشَدِّ الْعَذَابِ  
وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ○

٨٦- أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ اشْتَرَوُا الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا  
بِالْآخِرَةِ فَلَا يَخَفُفُ عَنْهُمْ الْعَذَابُ  
وَلَا هُمْ يُصْرَفُونَ ٥

C 47 —The people of Moses and the people of Jesus  
(ii 87 121) Were given revelations, but alas !

They played false with their own lights,  
And in their selfishness, made narrow  
God's universal message To them  
It seemed incredible that His light  
Should illumine Arabia and reform  
The world But His ways are wondrous,  
And they are clear to those who have Faith

#### SECTION 11

- 87 ~~We~~ We gave Moses the Book  
And followed him up  
With a succession of Apostles, <sup>89 A</sup>  
We gave Jesus the son of Mary <sup>90</sup>  
Clear (Signs) and strengthened him  
With the holy spirit Is it  
That whenever there comes to you  
An Apostle with what ye  
Yourselves desire not, ye are  
Puffed up with pride?—  
Some ye called impostors,  
And others ye slay <sup>91</sup>

٨٧- وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا مُوسَى الْكِتَابَ وَقَفَّيْنَا مِنْ  
بَعْدِهِ بِالرُّسُلِ وَآتَيْنَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ  
الْبَيِّنَاتِ وَآتَيْنَاهُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ الْقُدُسَ  
أَفَكُلَّمَا جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ بِمَا لَا تَهْوَى  
أَنفُسُكُمْ اسْتَكْبَرْتُمْ  
فَقَرِيفًا كَذَبْتُمْ وَقَرِيفًا تَقْتُلُونَ ○

89-A The word apostle is used here and throughout the Translation in the literal sense of ' One Sent ', and not in a specialized sense

90 As to the birth of Jesus Cf xix 16-34 Why is he called the "Son of Mary" ? What are his 'clear signs' ? What is the 'holy spirit' by which he was strengthened ? We reserve to a later stage a discussion of the Quranic teaching on these questions See iii 62 n 401

91 Notice the sudden transition from the past tense in some ye called impostors to the present tense in others ye slay There is a double significance First, reviewing the long course of Jewish history, we have come to the time of Jesus they have often given the lie to God's Apostles, and even now they are trying to slay Jesus Secondly extending the review of that history to the time of Muhammad, they are even now trying to take the life of that holy Apostle This would be literally true at the time the words were promulgated to the people And this transition leads on naturally to the next verse which refers to the actual conditions before Muhammad in Medina in the Second year of the Hijra

Sections 11 13 (ii 87 121) refer to the People of the Book generally Jews and Christians. Even where Moses and the Law of Sinai are referred to those traditions are common to both Jews and Christians The argument is about the people who ought to have learnt from previous Revelations

88 They say, "Our hearts  
Are the wrappings<sup>92</sup> (which  
preserve  
God's Word • we need no more)"  
Nay, God's curse is on them  
For their blasphemy<sup>93</sup>  
Little is it they believe

٨٨- وَقَالُوا قُلُوبُنَا غُلْفٌ  
لَنْ لَعْنَهُمُ اللَّهُ بِكُفْرِهِمْ  
فَقَلِيلًا مَّا يُؤْمِنُونَ ○

89. And when there comes to them  
A Book<sup>94</sup> from God, confirming  
What is with them,—although  
From of old they had prayed  
For victory against those  
Without Faith,—when there comes  
To them that which they  
(Should) have recognized,  
They refuse to believe in it  
But the curse of God  
Is on those without Faith

٨٩- وَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ كِتَابٌ مِّنْ عِندِ اللَّهِ  
مُصَدِّقٌ لِّمَا مَعَهُمْ  
وَكَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ يَسْتَفْتِحُونَ  
عَلَى الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَوَلَّمَا جَاءَهُمْ  
مَّا عَرَفُوا كَفَرُوا بِهِ  
فَلَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ ○

90 Miserable is the price  
For which they have sold  
Their souls, in that they  
Deny (the revelation)  
Which God has sent down,  
In insolent envy that God  
Of His Grace should send it  
To any of His servants He  
pleases<sup>95</sup>

٩٠- بِئْسَمَا اشْتَرَوْا بِهِ أَنْفُسَهُمْ  
أَن يَقْكُرُوا بِمَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ نَعِيًّا  
أَن يُنْزَلَ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ عَلَى مَنْ يَشَاءُ  
مِنْ عِبَادِهِ

92 The Jews in their arrogance claimed that all wisdom and all knowledge of God were enclosed in their hearts. But there were more things in heaven and earth than were dreamt of in their philosophy. Their claim was not only arrogance but blasphemy. In reality they were men without faith. (I take *Gulḥān* here to be the plural of *Gulāḥun* the wrapping or cover of a book in which the book is preserved.)

As usual there is a much wider meaning. How many people at all times and among all nations close their hearts to any extension of knowledge or spiritual influence because of some little fragment which they have got and which they think is the whole of God's Truth? Such an attitude shows really want of faith and is a blasphemous limitation of God's unlimited spiritual gifts to His creatures.

93 The root *kafara* has many shades of meaning. (1) to deny God's goodness to be ungrateful (2) to reject Faith deny His revelation (3) to blaspheme to ascribe some limitation or attribute to God which is derogatory to His nature. In a translation one shade or another must be put forward according to the context, but all are implied.

94 The Jews who pretended to be so superior to the people without Faith—the Gentiles—should have been the first to recognize the new Truth—or the Truth renewed—which it was Muḥammad's mission to bring because it was so similar in form and language to what they had already received. But they had more arrogance than faith. It is this want of faith that brings on the curse i.e. deprives us (if we adopt such an attitude) of the blessings of God.

Again the lesson applies to a much wider circle than the Jews. We are all apt in our perverseness to reject an appeal from our brother even more summarily than one from an outsider. If we have a glimmering of the truth we are apt to make ourselves impervious to further truth and thus lose the benefit of God's Grace.

95 Racial arrogance made the Jews averse to the reception of Truth when it came through a servant of God not of their own race. Again the lesson is wider. Is that averseness unknown in our own times and among other races? Yet how can a race or a people set bounds to God's choice? God is the Creator and Cherisher of all races and all worlds.

Thus have they drawn  
On themselves Wrath upon Wrath  
And humiliating is the punishment  
Of those who reject Faith

- 91 When it is said to them,  
"Believe in what God  
Hath sent down," they say,  
"We believe in what was sent  
down

To us " yet they reject  
All besides, even if it be Truth  
Confirming what is with them  
Say "Why then have ye slain  
The prophets of God in times  
Gone by, if ye did indeed  
Believe?"<sup>96</sup>

- 92 There came to you Moses  
With clear (Signs), yet  
Ye worshipped the Calf  
(Even) after that, and ye  
Did behave wrongfully

- 93 And remember We took  
Your Covenant and We raised  
Above you (the towering height)  
Of Mount (Sinai)  
(Saying) "Hold firmly  
To what We have given you,  
And hearken (to the Law)"<sup>97</sup>  
They said "We hear,  
And we disobey"<sup>98</sup>  
And they had to drink<sup>99</sup>

فَبَاءُوا بِغَضَبٍ عَلَى غَضَبٍ  
وَالْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابٌ مُهِينٌ ○

٩١- وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمُ امْضُوا بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكُمْ  
قَالُوا نُوْمِنُ بِمَا أُنزِلَ عَلَيْنَا  
وَيَكْفُرُونَ بِمَا وَرَاءَهُ وَهُوَ الْحَقُّ  
مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا مَعَهُمْ  
قُلْ فَلِمَ تَقْتُلُونَ أَنْبِيَاءَ اللَّهِ  
مِنْ قَبْلٍ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ ○

٩٢- وَلَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ مُوسَى بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ  
ثُمَّ اخْتَرْتُمْ الْعِجْلَ  
مِنْ بَعْدِهِ وَأَنْتُمْ ظَالِمُونَ ○

٩٣- وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَكُمْ  
وَرَفَعْنَا قُوفَكُمْ الطُّورَ  
خُذُوا مَا آتَيْنَاكُمْ بِقُوَّةٍ  
وَاسْمَعُوا فَالُوا سَاجِدًا وَعَصَيْنَا  
وَأَشْرُوا

96 Even the race argument is often a flimsy and hollow pretext Did not the Jews reject Prophets of their own race who told them unpleasant truths? And do not other nations do likewise? The real trouble is selfishness narrowness a mean dislike of anything which runs counter to habits customs or inclinations

97 Cf the introductory words of ii 63 which are the same as the introductory words here but the argument is developed in a different direction in the two places In ii 63 after they are reminded of the solemn Covenant under the towering height of Mount Sinai they are told how they broke the Covenant in after ages Here after they are reminded of the same solemn Covenant they are told that even then they never meant to observe it Their thought is expressed in biting words of sarcasm They said in words 'All that the Lord hath spoken we will do' But they said in their hearts

We shall disobey

98 What they should have said was We hear and we obey this is the attitude of the true men of Faith (ii 285)

99 After the Commandments and the Law had been given at Mount Sinai and the people had solemnly given their Covenant Moses went up to the Mount and in his absence the people made the golden calf When Moses returned his anger waxed hot He took the Calf which they had made and burnt it in the fire and ground it to powder and strewed it upon the water and made the children of Israel drink of it (Exod xxxii 20) This incident is interpreted in the Qur'an allegorically The Calf is the symbol of disobedience, rebellion want of faith It was like a taint of poison Their punishment was to swallow the taint or poison which they had themselves produced They swallowed it not into their stomachs but into their hearts, their very being They had to mortify and humble themselves in the sight of God, as was shown in another allegory based on the Jewish narrative (see ii 54 and note, above)



Into their hearts  
(Of the taint) of the Calf  
Because of their Faithlessness  
Say "Vile indeed  
Are the behests of your Faith  
If ye have any faith!"

- 94 Say "If the last Home,  
With God, be for you specially,  
And not for any one else,  
Then seek ye for death,  
If ye are sincere"

- 95 But they will never seek  
For death, on account of the (sins)  
Which their hands have sent  
On before them<sup>100</sup>  
And God is well acquainted  
With the wrong-doers

- 96 Thou wilt indeed find them,  
Of all people, most greedy  
Of life,—even more  
Than the idolaters  
Each one of them wishes  
He could be given a life  
Of a thousand years  
But the grant of such life  
Will not save him  
From (due) punishment  
For God sees well  
All that they do

#### SECTION 12

- 97 Say Whoever is an enemy<sup>101</sup>  
To Gabriel—for he brings down

فِي قُلُوبِهِمُ الْعِجْلَ بِكُفْرِهِمْ  
قُلْ بِئْسَمَا بِأَمْرِكُمْ بِهِ إِنَّمَا أَنْتُمْ مُنْذَرُونَ  
مُؤْمِنِينَ ○

٩٤- قُلْ إِنْ كَانَتْ لَكُمْ الدَّارُ الْآخِرَةُ عِنْدَ  
اللَّهِ خَالِصَةً مِّنْ دُونِ النَّاسِ  
فَتَسْأَلُوا الْمَوْتَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ○

٩٥- وَلَنْ يَتَمَوَّعَ أَتَدَّ  
بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ  
وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِالظَّالِمِينَ ○

٩٦- وَلَنَجْذِثَهُمْ أَجْرَصَ النَّاسِ عَلَى حَيَاتِهِ  
فِي ذَوِّهِمُ الَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا  
يُودُّ أَحَدُهُمْ لَوْ يُعَمَّرَ أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ  
وَمَا هُوَ بِمُرْخِذِهِ مِنَ الْعَذَابِ أَنْ  
يُعَمَّرَ  
ي وَاللَّهُ بَصِيرٌ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ ○

٩٧- قُلْ مَنْ كَانَ عَدُوًّا لِجَبْرِئِيلَ فَإِنَّهُ

100 The phrase What their hands have sent on before them frequently occurs in the Qur'an. Here and in many places it refers to sins. In such passages as lxxviii 40 or lxxxii 14 it is implied that both good and bad deeds go before us to the judgment seat of God before we do ourselves. In ii 110 it is the good that goes before us. Our deeds are personified. They are witnesses for or against us and they always go before us. Their good or bad influence begins to operate before we even know it. This is more general than the New Testament idea in the First Epistle of St Paul to Timothy v 24. Some men's sins are open beforehand going before to judgment and some men they follow after.

101 A party of the Jews in the time of Muhammad ridiculed the Muslim belief that Gabriel brought dawn revelations to Muhammad Mustafā. Michael was called in their books the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people (Daniel xii 1). The vision of Gabriel inspired fear (Daniel viii 16 17). But this pretence—that Michael was their friend and Gabriel their enemy—was merely a manifestation of their unbelief in angels, apostles and God Himself, and such unbelief could not win the love of God. In any case it was disingenuous to say that they believed in one angel and not in another. Muhammad's inspiration was through visions of Gabriel. Muhammad had been helped to the highest spiritual light and the message which he delivered and his spotless integrity and exemplary life were manifest Signs which every one could understand except those who were obstinate and perverse. Besides, the verses of the Qur'an were in themselves reasonable and clear.



The (revelation) to thy heart  
By God's will, a confirmation  
Of what went before,  
And guidance and glad tidings  
For those who believe,—

- 98 Whoever is an enemy to God  
And His angels and apostles,  
To Gabriel and Michael,—  
Lo ! God is an enemy to those  
Who reject Faith

- 99 We have sent down to thee  
Manifest Signs (*ayat*) ,  
And none reject them  
But those who are perverse

- 100 Is it not (the case) that  
Every time they make a Covenant,  
Some party among them  
Throw it aside ?—Nay,  
Most of them are faithless

- 101 And when there came to them  
An Apostle from God,  
Confirming what was with them,  
A party of the People of the Book  
Threw away the Book of God <sup>102</sup>  
Behind their backs,  
As if (it had been something)  
They did not know !

- 102 They followed what the evil  
ones <sup>103</sup>  
Gave out (falsely)  
Against the power  
Of Solomon the blasphemers  
Were, not Solomon, but  
The evil ones, teaching men

نَزَّلَهُ عَلَى قَلْبِكَ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ مُصَدِّقًا  
لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَهُدًى وَنُورًا  
لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ○

٩٨- مَنْ كَانَ عَدُوًّا لِلَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ  
وَجِبْرِيلَ وَمِيكَالَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَدُوٌّ  
لِّلْكَافِرِينَ ○

٩٩- وَلَقَدْ أَنزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ آيَاتٍ بَيِّنَاتٍ  
وَمَا يَكْفُرُ بِهَا إِلَّا الْفَاسِقُونَ ○

١٠٠- أَوْ كَلِمَاتٍ عَهْدًا وَعَهْدًا

بَدَلَهُ فَرِيقٌ مِّنْهُمْ ط

بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ○

١٠١- وَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ رَسُولٌ مِّنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ  
مُصَدِّقٌ لِّمَا مَعَهُمْ

بَنَدَ فَرِيقٌ مِّنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ ۖ كَتَبَ  
اللَّهُ وَرَاءَ ظُهُورِهِمْ كَأَنَّهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ○

١٠٢- وَاتَّبَعُوا مَا تَتْلُوا الشَّيَاطِينُ عَلَى  
مُلْكٍ سُلَيْمَنَ ۖ وَمَا كَفَرَ سُلَيْمَنُ وَلَكِنَّ  
الشَّيَاطِينَ كَفَرُوا يُعَلِّمُونَ النَّاسَ السِّحْرَ

102 I think that by the Book of God here is meant not the Qur ān but the Book which the People of the Book had been given viz the previous Revelations The argument is that Muḥammad's Message was similar to Revelations which they had already received and if they had looked into their own Books honestly and sincerely they would have found proofs in them to show that the new Message was true and from God But they ignored their own Books or twisted or distorted them according to their own fancies Worse they followed something which was actually false and mischievous and inspired by the evil one Such was the belief in magic and sorcery These are described in the next verse in terms referring to the beliefs and practices of the People of the Book

103 This is a continuation of the argument in 101 The People of the Book instead of sticking to the plain Books of Revelations and seeking to do the will of God ran after all sorts of occult knowledge most of which was false and evil Many wonderful tales of occult power attributed the power of Solomon to magic But Solomon dealt in no arts of evil It was the powers of evil that pretended to force the laws of nature and the will of God, such a pretence is plainly blasphemy

Magic, and such things  
As came down at Babylon  
To the angels Hārūt and

Marūt <sup>104</sup>

But neither of these taught anyone  
(Such things) without saying  
"We are only for trial,  
So do not blaspheme"  
They learned from them <sup>105</sup>  
The means to sow discord  
Between man and wife  
But they could not thus  
Harm anyone except  
By God's permission  
And they learned what harmed  
them,

Not what profited them  
And they knew that the buvers  
Of (magic) would have  
No share in the happiness  
Of the Hereafter And vile  
Was the price for which  
They did sell their souls,  
If they but knew!

103 If they had kept their Faith  
And guarded themselves from evil,

وَمَا أُنْزِلَ عَلَى الْمَلَكَيْنِ بِبَابِلَ هَارُوتَ  
وَمَارُوتَ

وَمَا يَعْلَمَانِ مِنْ أَحَدٍ  
حَتَّى يَقُولَا إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ فِتْنَةٌ فَلَا تَكْفُرْ  
فَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ مِنْهُمَا مَا يُفَرِّقُونَ بِهِ بَيْنَ  
الْمَرْءِ وَزَوْجِهِ

وَمَا هُمْ بِضَآئِرِينَ بِهِ مِنْ أَحَدٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ  
وَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ مَا يَضُرُّهُمْ وَلَا يَنْفَعُهُمْ  
وَلَقَدْ عَلِمُوا لَمَنِ اشْتَرَاهُ مَا لَهُ فِي  
الْآخِرَةِ مِنْ خَلَاقٍ  
وَلَيْتُمْ مَا تَشْرَوْنَ بِهِ أَنْفُسَهُمْ  
لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ ○

١٠٣- وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ آمَنُوا وَآثَقُوا لَعُقُوبَةَ

104 This verse has been interpreted variously Who were Hārūt and Marūt? What did they teach? Why did they teach it? The view which commends itself to me is that of the *Tafsir Haqqānī* following Baiḥāwī and the *Tafsir Kabīr*. The word angels as applied to Hārūt and Marūt is figurative. It means good men of knowledge science (or wisdom) and power. In modern languages the word angel is applied to a good and beautiful woman. The earlier tradition made angels masculine and applied to them the attributes which I have mentioned along with the attribute of beauty which was implied in goodness knowledge wisdom and power.

Hārūt and Mārūt lived in Babylon a very ancient seat of science especially the science of astronomy. The period may be supposed to be anywhere about the time when the ancient Eastern Monarchies were strong and enlightened probably even earlier as Mārūt or Marduk was a deified hero afterwards worshipped as a god of magic in Babylon. Being good men Hārūt and Mārūt of course dabbled in nothing evil and their hands were certainly clean of fraud. But knowledge and the arts if learned by evil men can be applied to evil uses. The evil ones besides their fraudulent magic also learnt a little of this true science and applied it to evil uses. Hārūt and Mārūt did not withhold knowledge yet never taught anyone without plainly warning them of the trial and temptation of knowledge in the hands of evil men. Being men of insight they also saw the blasphemy that might rise to the lips of the evil ones puffed up with science and warned them against it. Knowledge is indeed a trial or temptation if we are warned we know its dangers if God has endowed us with free will we must be free to choose between the benefit and the danger.


Among the Jewish traditions in the Midrash (Jewish *Tafsīr*) was a story of two angels who asked God's permission to come down to earth but succumbed to temptation and were hung up by their feet at Babylon for punishment. Such stories about sinning angels who were cast down to punishment were believed in by the early Christians also. (See the Second Epistle of Peter ii 4 and the Epistle of Jude verse 6.) There may be an allusion to such legends here but much spiritualized and we are expressly warned against dabbling in magic or believing that anything can hurt us except by God's will and God is just and righteous.

105 What the evil ones learnt from Hārūt and Mārūt (see last note) they turned to evil. When mixed with fraud and deception it appeared as charms and spells and love potions. They did nothing but cause discord between the sexes. But of course their power was limited to the extent to which God permitted the evil to work for His grace protected all who sought His guidance and repented and returned to Him. But apart from the harm that these false pretenders might do to others the chief harm which they did was to their own souls. They sold themselves into slavery to the Evil One as is shown in the allegory of Goethe's *Faust*. That allegory dealt with the individual soul. Here the tragedy is shown to occur not only to individuals but to whole groups of people, for example, the People of the Book. Indeed the story might be extended indefinitely.

Far better had been  
The reward from their Lord,  
If they but knew !

مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ  
لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ ٥

## SECTION 13

104  ye of Faith !  
Say not (to the Apostle)  
Words of ambiguous import, <sup>106</sup>  
But words of respect ,  
And hearken (to him)  
To those without Faith  
Is a grievous punishment

١٠٣- يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا  
لَا تَقُوْلُوْا رَآعِنَا  
وَقُوْلُوْا اَنْظُرْنَا وَاَسْمَعُوْا  
وَلِلْكَافِرِيْنَ عَذَابٌ اَلِيْمٌ ٥

105 It is never the wish  
Of those without Faith  
Among the People of the Book,  
Nor of the Pagans,  
That anything good  
Should come down to you  
From your Lord  
But God will choose  
For His special Mercy  
Whom He will—for God is  
Lord of grace abounding

١٠٥- مَا يَوْذُوْا الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا  
مِنْ اَهْلِ الْكِتٰبِ  
وَلَا الْمُشْرِكِيْنَ  
اَنْ يُنْزَلَ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ مِّنْ رَّبِّكُمْ  
وَاللّٰهُ يَخْتَصُّ بِرَحْمَتِهِ مَن يَّشَآءُ  
وَاللّٰهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيْمِ ٥

106 None of our revelations <sup>107</sup>  
Do we abrogate  
Or cause to be forgotten,  
But we substitute

١٠٦- مَا نَنْسَخْ مِنْ آيَةٍ  
اَوْ نُنسِهَا نَأْتِ

106 The word disapproved is *Rā' nā* which as used by the Muslims meant ' Please look at us, attend to us ' But it was ridiculed by enemies by a little twist to suggest some insulting meaning So an unambiguous word ' *Unzurnā*, with the same meaning is suggested The general lesson is that we must guard ourselves against the cynical trick of using words which sound complimentary to the ear but have a hidden barb in them Not only must we be plain and honest in our words We must respectfully hearken to the words of a Teacher whom we have addressed Thoughtless people use vain words or put foolish questions and straightway turn their minds to something else.

107 The word which I have translated by the word ' revelations ' is *Āyāt* See C 41 and n 15 It is not only used for verses of the *Qur'ān* but in a general sense for God's revelations as in 11 39 and for other Signs of God in history or nature or miracles as in 11 61 It has even been used for human signs and tokens of wonder as for example monuments or land marks built by the ancient people of *Ad* (xxvi 128) What is the meaning here? If we take it in a general sense it means that God's Message from age to age is always the same but that its form may differ according to the needs and exigencies of the time That form was different as given to Moses and then to Jesus and then to Muhammad Some commentators apply it also to the *Āyāt* of the *Qur'ān* There is nothing derogatory in this if we believe in progressive revelation In 11 7 we are told distinctly about the *Qur'ān*, that some of its verses are basic or fundamental and others are allegorical and it is mischievous to treat the allegorical verses and follow them (literally) On the other hand it is absurd to treat such a verse as 11 115 as if it were abrogated by 11 144 about the *Qibla* We turn to the *Qibla*, but we do not believe that God is only in one place He is everywhere See second note to 11 144

There may be express abrogation or there may be ' causing or permitting to forget ' How many good and wise institutions gradually become obsolete by afflux of time? Then there is the gradual process of disuse or forgetting in evolution This does not mean that eternal principles change It is only a sign of God's infinite Power that His creation should take so many forms and shapes not only in the material world but in the world of man's thought and expression

Something better or similar  
Knowest thou not that God  
Hath power over all things?

- 107 Knowest thou not  
That to God belongeth  
The dominion of the heavens  
And the earth?  
And besides Him ye have  
Neither patron nor helper

- 108 **W**ould ye question  
Your Apostle as Moses<sup>108</sup>  
Was questioned of old?  
But whoever changeth  
From Faith to Unbelief,  
Hath strayed without doubt  
From the even way<sup>109</sup>

- 109 Quite a number of the People  
Of the Book wish they could  
Turn you (people) back  
To infidelity after ye have  
believed,  
From selfish envy,  
After the Truth hath become  
Manifest unto them  
But forgive and overlook,<sup>110</sup>  
Till God accomplish  
His purpose,<sup>111</sup> for God  
Hath power over all things<sup>112</sup>

بِخَيْرٍ مِنْهَا أَوْ مِثْلَهَا  
أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ۝

١٠٧- أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَوَاتِ  
وَالْأَرْضِ ۚ وَمَا لَكُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مِنْ  
وَلِيٍّ وَلَا نَصِيرٍ ۝

٨- أَمْ تَرِيدُونَ أَنْ تَسْأَلُوا رَسُولَكُمْ  
كَمَا سَأَلَ مُوسَى مِنْ قَبْلُ  
وَمَنْ يَتَّبِعِ الْكُفْرَ بِالْإِيمَانِ  
فَقَدْ ضَلَّ سَوَاءَ السَّبِيلِ ۝

١٠٩- وَكَثِيرٌ مِّنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ  
لَوْ يَرُدُّوكُمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ إِيمَانِكُمْ كُفَّارًا ۚ  
حَسَدًا مِّنْ عِنْدِ أَنْفُسِهِمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ مَا  
تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الْحَقُّ ۚ  
فَاعْفُوا وَاصْفَحُوا حَتَّىٰ يَأْتِيَ اللَّهَ بِأَمْرٍ  
ۖ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ۝

108 Moses was constantly harassed with foolish impertinent or disingenuous questions by his own people. We must not follow that bad example. In spiritual matters posers do no good questions should be asked only for real instruction.

109 Even way the Arabic word *sawā* signifies smoothness as opposed to roughness, symmetry as opposed to want of plan, equality or proportion as opposed to want of design, rectitude as opposed to crookedness, a mean as opposed to extremes, and fitness for the object held in view as opposed to faultiness.

110 Three words are used in the Qur'ān with a meaning akin to "forgive", but each with a different shade of meaning. *Afā* (here translated forgive) means to forget, to obliterate from one's mind. *Safaha* (here translated overlook) means to turn away from to ignore, to treat a matter as if it did not affect one. *Gafara* (which does not occur in this verse) means to cover up something as God does to our sins with His grace. This word is particularly appropriate in God's attribute of *Gaffār*, the One who forgives again and again.

111 The word *Amr* is comprehensive and includes (1) an order or command as in xcvi 12 or (2) a purpose design will as in xviii 82 or (3) affairs working doing carrying out or execution of a design, as in lxxxix 5. In many cases some of these meanings run together.

112 Note how this phrase seemingly repeated from ii 106 and occurring in many other places, has an appropriate signification in each place. In ii 106 we were told about progressive revelation, how the same thing may take different forms and seeming human infirmity contribute to the fulfilment of God's design for God's power is unlimited. Here we are told to be patient and forgiving against envy and injustice. This too may be fulfilling God's purpose, for His power is infinite.

110 And be steadfast in prayer  
And regular in charity  
And whatever good  
Ye send forth for your souls<sup>113</sup>  
Before you, ye shall find it  
With God for God sees  
Well all that ye do

111 And they say "None  
Shall enter Paradise unless  
He be a Jew or a Christian "  
Those are their (vain) desires  
Say "Produce your proof  
If ye are truthful "

112 Nay,— whoever submits  
His whole self<sup>114</sup> to God  
And is a doer of good,—  
He will get his reward  
With his Lord,  
On such shall be no fear,  
Nor shall they grieve<sup>115</sup>

## SECTION 14

113 The Jews say "The Christians  
Have naught (to stand) upon,"  
And the Christians say  
"The Jews have naught  
(To stand) upon " Yet they  
(Profess to) study the (same) Book  
Like unto their word  
Is what those say who know<sup>116</sup>  
not,

۱۱۰- وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ  
وَمَا تَقْدُمُوا لَأَنفُسِكُمْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ يَحْدُثْهُ  
عِنْدَ اللَّهِ  
إِنْ اللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ۝

۱۱۱- وَقَالُوا لَنْ يَدْخُلَ الْجَنَّةَ إِلَّا مَنْ  
كَانَ هُودًا أَوْ نَصْرِيًّا تِلْكَ أَمَانِيُّهُمْ قُلْ  
هَاتُوا بُرْهَانَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ۝

۱۱۲- تِلْكَ مَنْ أَسْلَمَ وَجْهَهُ لِلَّهِ  
وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ فَلَهُ أَجْرُهُ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِ  
وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ۝

۱۱۳- وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُودُ لَيْسَبِ النَّصْرِيُّ عَلَى  
نَسِيٍِّّ وَقَالَتِ النَّصْرِيُّ لَنَسَبِ الْيَهُودُ  
عَلَى شَيْءٍ وَهُمْ يَتْلُونَ الْكِتَابَ  
كَذَلِكَ قَالَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ مِنْ قَوْلِهِمْ

113 Cf II 95 n

114 The word translated 'self' is *Wajh* a comprehensive Arabic word. It means (1) literally face but it may imply (2) countenance or favour as in xcii 20 (3) honour glory Presence as applied to God as in ii 115 and perhaps also in lv 27, (4) cause sake ( for the sake of ) as in lxxvi 8 (5) the first part, the beginning as in iii 71 (6) nature inner being essence self as in v, lli xxviii 88 and perhaps also in lv 27 Here I understand meaning 6 the face expresses the personality or the whole inner self of man

115 This phrase comes in aptly in its own context many times. In this Sūra it occurs in ii 38 62 112, 262 274 and 277. It serves the same purpose as a refrain in a very well arranged Song or a motif in Wagner's powerful music

116 It is a sure sign of ignorance and prejudice when you study the same book as another or a similar one and yet are absolutely intolerant of the meaning which the other draws from it. You should know better but you speak like the ignorant. In this case the primary reference in the word "ignorant" may be to the Pagan Arabs

But God will judge  
Between them in their quarrel  
On the Day of Judgment

فَاللَّهُ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ فِيمَا كَانُوا  
فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ ○

- 114 And who is more unjust  
Than he who forbids<sup>117</sup>  
That in places for the worship  
Of God, God's name should be  
Celebrated?—whose zeal  
Is (in fact) to ruin them?  
It was not fitting that such  
Should themselves enter them  
Except in fear For them  
There is nothing but disgrace  
In this world, and in the world  
To come, an exceeding torment

۱۱۴- وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ مَنَعَ مَسْجِدَ اللَّهِ  
أَنْ يُذَكَّرَ فِيهَا اسْمُهُ وَسَعَىٰ فِي خَرَابِهَا  
أُولَٰئِكَ مَا كَانَ لَهُمْ أَنْ يَدْخُلُوهَا إِلَّا  
خَافِينَ هُوَ  
لَهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا خِزْيٌ وَلَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ  
عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ○

- 115 To God belong the East  
And the West whithersoever  
Ye turn, there is the Presence<sup>118</sup>  
Of God For God is  
All-Pervading,  
All-Knowing

۱۱۵- وَلِلَّهِ الْمَشْرِقُ وَالْمَغْرِبُ  
فَإَيُّمَا تَوَلَّوْا فَتَمَّ وَجْهُ اللَّهِ  
إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ○

- 116 They say "God hath begotten  
A son" Glory be to Him—Nay,  
To Him belongs all  
That is in the heavens  
And on earth everything  
Renders worship to Him<sup>119</sup>

۱۱۶- وَقَالُوا اتَّخَذَ اللَّهُ وَلَدًا  
سُبْحَنَهُ نُلْ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ  
كُلٌّ لَهُ قَلْبَتُونَ ○

- 117 To Him is due  
The primal origin

۱۱۷- بَدِيعُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ

117 There were actually Pagans in Mecca who tried to shut out the Muslim Arabs from the Kaaba the universal place of Arab worship. The Pagans themselves called it the House of God. With what face could they exclude the Muslims who wanted to worship the true God instead of worshipping idols? If these Pagans had succeeded they would only have caused violent divisions among the Arabs and destroyed the sanctity and the very existence of the Kaaba.

This verse taken in a general sense establishes the principle of freedom of worship in a public mosque or place dedicated to the worship of God. This is recognized in Muslim law. There may be differences of opinion between one individual and another or between one group and another as to the nature of God or the proper mode of worship but no tests can be laid down nor can one individual or sect exclude another. So long as a person enters reverently and does nothing outwardly to cause offence to the other worshippers, he has a right to go and worship in a public place set apart for God's worship.

118 The word translated Presence is *Wajh*, literally face. See note to 11 112 above.

119 It is a derogation from the glory of God—in fact it is blasphemy—to say that God begets sons like a man or an animal. The Christian doctrine is here emphatically repudiated. If words have any meaning it would mean an attribution to God of a material nature and of the lower animal functions of sex. In a spiritual sense we are all children of God. And all Creation celebrates His glory. Verse 117 should be read with this to complete the argument.

Of the heavens and the earth <sup>120</sup>  
When He decreeth a matter,  
He saith to it "Be,"  
And it is

وَلَإِذَا قَضَىٰ أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُ كُنْ  
فَيَكُونُ ○

118 Say those without knowledge  
"Why speaketh not God  
Unto us? Or why cometh not  
Unto us a Sign?"  
So said the people before them  
Words of similar import  
Their hearts are alike  
We have indeed made clear  
The Signs unto any people  
Who hold firmly  
To Faith (in their hearts)

١١٨- وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ لَوْلَا  
يَكَلِّمُنَا اللَّهُ أَوْ تَأْتِينَا آيَةٌ  
كَذَلِكَ قَالَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ مِثْلَ  
قَوْلِهِمْ  
تَسَاءَلْتُمْ فَأْتِيكُمْ فُتُوبُهُمْ  
قَدْ بَيَّنَّا الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يُوقِنُونَ ○

119 Verily We have sent thee  
In truth as a bearer  
Of glad tidings and a warner  
But of thee no question  
Shall be asked of the Companions  
Of the Blazing Fire

١١٩- إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ بِالْحَقِّ بَشِيرًا  
وَنَذِيرًا  
وَلَا تُسْأَلُ عَنْ أَصْحَابِ الْحَجِيرِ ○

120 Never will the Jews  
Or the Christians be satisfied  
With thee unless thou follow  
Their form of religion Say

١٢٠- وَلَنْ تَرْضَىٰ عَنْكَ الْيَهُودُ وَلَا النَّصَارَىٰ  
حَتَّىٰ تَتَّبِعَ مِلَّتَهُمْ قُلْ

120 The previous verse told us that everything in heaven and earth celebrates the glory of God. Lest any one should think that the heavens and the earth were themselves primeval and eternal we are now told that they themselves are creatures of God's will and design Cf vi 102 where the word *bada'a* is used as here for the creation of the heavens and the earth and *khalafa* is used for the creation of all things. *Bada'a* goes back to the very primal beginning as far as we can conceive it. The materialists might say that primeval matter was eternal other things i.e. the forms and shapes as we see them now were called into being at some time or other and will perish. When they perish they dissolve into primeval matter again which stands as the base of all existence. We go further back. We say that if we postulate such primeval matter it owes its origin itself to God. Who is the final basis of existence the Cause of all Causes. If this is conceded we proceed to argue that the process of Creation is not then completed. All things in the heavens and on the earth are created by gradual processes. In things we include abstract as well as material things. We see the abstract things and ideas actually growing before us. But that also is God's creation to which we can apply the word *khalafa* for in it is involved the idea of measuring fitting it into a scheme of other things. Cf liv 49 also xxv 59. Here comes in what we know as the process of evolution. On the other hand the *amr* (=Command Direction Design) is a single thing unrelated to Time like the twinkling of an eye (liv 50). Another word to note in this connection is *ja'ala* "making" which seems to imply new shapes and forms new dispositions as the making of the Signs of the Zodiac in the heavens or the setting out of the sun and moon for light or the establishment of the succession of day and night (xxv 61 62). A further process with regard to the soul is described in the word *sawwa* bringing it to perfection (xc 7) but this we shall discuss in its place. *Fajara* (xli 11) implies like *bada'a* the creating of a thing out of nothing and after no pre-existing similitude but perhaps *fajara* implies the creation of primeval matter to which further processes have to be applied later as when one prepares dough but leaves the leavening to be done after *Bada'a* (without the *ain*) xxx 27 implies beginning the process of creation this is made further clear in xxxii 7 where the beginning of the creation of pristine man from clay refers to his physical body leaving the further processes of reproduction and the breathing in of the soul to be described in subsequent verses. Lastly, *baraa* is creation implying liberation from pre-existing matter or circumstance e.g. man's body from clay (lix 24) or a calamity from previously existing circumstances (lvi 22). See also vi, 94, n 916, vi 98, n 923, lix 24, nn 3405-6.



"The Guidance of God,—that  
Is the (only) Guidance"  
Wert thou to follow their desires  
After the knowledge  
Which hath reached thee,  
Then wouldst thou find  
Neither Protector nor Helper  
Against God

إِنَّ هُدَى اللَّهِ هُوَ الْهُدَىٰ  
وَلَيْنِ اتَّبَعْتَ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ بَعْدَ الَّذِي  
جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ  
مَالِكَ مِنَ اللَّهِ مِنْ قِبَلِي وَلَا نَصِيرَ ۝

- 121 Those to whom We have sent  
The Book study it as it  
Should be studied they are  
The ones that believe therein  
Those who reject faith therein,—  
The loss is their own

۱۲۱- الَّذِينَ اتَّعَتْهُمْ الرُّكُوبَ يَتْلُوهُ حَقًّا  
تِلَاوَتِهِ ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِ ۚ وَمَنْ  
يَكْفُرْ بِهِ ۚ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ ۝

- C 48 -- If the People of the Book rely  
(u 122 141) Upon Abraham, let them study  
His history His posterity included  
Both Israel and Ismā'il Abraham  
Was a righteous man of God,  
A Muslim, and so were his children  
Abraham and Ismā'il built  
The Ka'ba as the house of God,  
And purified it, to be a centre  
Of worship for all the world  
For God is the God of all Peoples <sup>121</sup>

## SECTION 15

- 122 ② Children of Israel! call to  
mind  
The special favour which I  
bestowed  
Upon you, and that I preferred you  
To all others (for My Message)

۱۲۲- يٰۤاَيُّهَا بَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ اذْكُرُوا بِعَنِّي الَّتِي  
أَنْعَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ  
وَإِنِّي فَضَّلْتُكُمْ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ ۝

- 123 Then guard yourselves against  
a Day

۱۲۳- وَاتَّقُوا يَوْمًا

121 The argument now proceeds on another line Ye People of the Book who go back to Abraham! not only is your claim to exclusive knowledge of God false and derogatory to the Lord of All the Worlds If you must appeal to Abraham he was also the progenitor of the Arab race through Ismā'il Indeed Abraham and Ismā'il together built the House of God in Mecca (long before the Temple of Jerusalem was built) They purified it and laid the foundations of the universal religion, which is summed up in the word Islam or complete submission to the Will of God Abraham and Ismā'il were thus true Muslims Whence then your rancour against Islam?

Historically the Temple at Mecca must have been a far more ancient place of worship than the Temple at Jerusalem Arab tradition connects various places in and around Mecca with the name of Abraham and identifies the well of Zam zam with the well in the story of the child Ismā'il Arab tradition also refers the story of the Sacrifice to Ismā'il and not to Isaac, therein differing from the Jewish tradition in Gen. xxi 1 19



When one soul shall not avail  
another,  
Nor shall compensation be  
accepted from her  
Nor shall intercession profit her  
Nor shall any one be helped  
(from outside) <sup>122</sup>

- 124 And remember that Abraham  
Was tried by his Lord  
With certain Commands, <sup>123</sup>  
Which he fulfilled  
He said "I will make thee  
An Imām <sup>124</sup> to the Nations"  
He pleaded "And also  
(Imāms) from my offspring!"  
He answered "But My Promise  
Is not within the reach  
Of evil doers"

- 125 Remember We made the House <sup>125</sup>  
A place of assembly for men  
And a place of safety,  
And take ye the Station  
Of Abraham as a place  
Of prayer, and We covenanted  
With Abraham and Ismā'il,  
That they should sanctify  
My House for those who  
Compass it round, or use it

لَا تَجْزِي نَفْسٌ عَنْ نَفْسٍ شَيْئًا  
وَلَا يَقْبَلُ مِنْهَا عَدْلٌ  
وَلَا تَنْفَعُهَا شَفَاعَةٌ  
وَلَا هُمْ يُنصَرُونَ ○

١٢٣- وَإِذْ آتَيْنَاهُم رُءُوبًا  
بِكَلِمَةٍ فَاَتَتْهُمْ  
قَالَ إِنِّي جَاعِلُكَ  
لِلنَّاسِ إِمَامًا  
قَالَ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي  
قَالَ لَا يَنَالُ عَهْدِي الظَّالِمِينَ ○  
١٢٥- وَإِذْ جَعَلْنَا الْبَيْتَ مَثَانًا لِّلنَّاسِ  
وَآمَنًا  
وَاتَّخِذُوا مِن مَّقَامِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ مُصَلًّى  
وَعَهْدًا إِلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَاسْمِعِيلَ  
إِنَّ طَهْرًا سَيِّئًا

122 Verses 122 123 repeat verses 47 48 (except for a slight verbal variation in 123 which does not affect the sense) The argument about the favours to Israel is thus beautifully rounded off and we now proceed to the argument in favour of the Arabs as succeeding to the spiritual inheritance of Abraham

123 *Kalimāt* literally words here used in the mystic sense of God's Will or Decree or Purpose This verse may be taken to be the sum of the verses following In everything Abraham fulfilled God's wish he purified God's house he built the sacred refuge of the Ka'ba he submitted his will to God's and thus became the type of Islam He was promised the leadership of the world he pleaded for his progeny and his prayer was granted with the limitation that if his progeny was false to God God's promise did not reach the people who proved themselves false

124 *Imām* the primary sense is that of being foremost hence it may mean (1) leader of religion (2) leader in congregational prayer (3) model pattern example (4) a book of guidance and instruction (xi 17) (5) a book of evidence or record (xxxvi 12) Here meanings 1 and 3 are implied In ix 12 the word is applied to leaders of Unbelief or Blasphemy

125 The Ka'ba the House of God Its foundation goes back by Arab tradition to Abraham Its four fold character is here referred to (1) It was the centre to which all the Arab tribes resorted for trade for poetic contests and for worship (2) It was sacred territory and was respected by friend and foe alike At certain seasons all fighting was and is forbidden within its limits and even arms are not allowed to be carried and no game or other thing is allowed to be killed Like the Cities of Refuge under the Mosaic Dispensation to which manslayers could flee (Num xxxv 6) or the Sanctuaries in Mediæval Europe to which criminals could not be pursued Mecca was recognised by Arab custom as inviolable for the pursuit of revenge or violence (3) It was a place of prayer even to-day there is a Station of Abraham within the enclosure where Abraham was supposed to have prayed (4) It must be held pure and sacred for all purposes

Though the verse as a whole is expressed in the First Person Plural the House is called 'My House,' to emphasize the personal relation of the One True God to it, and repudiate the Polytheism which defiled it before it was purified again by Muḥammad

As a retreat, or bow, or  
Prostrate themselves (therein <sup>126</sup>  
In prayer)

- 126 And remember Abraham said  
"My Lord, make this a City  
Of Peace,<sup>127</sup> and feed its People  
With Fruits,<sup>128</sup>—such of them  
As believe in God and the Last  
Day"  
He said "(Yea), and such as  
Reject Faith,—for a while  
Will I grant them their pleasure,  
But will soon drive them  
To the torment of Fire,—  
An evil destination (indeed)!"

- 127 And remember Abraham  
And Isma'il raised  
The foundations of the House  
(With this prayer) "Our Lord!  
Accept (this service) from us  
For Thou art the All Hearing,  
The All-Knowing

- 128 "Our Lord! Make of us  
Muslims, bowing to Thy (Will),  
And of our progeny a people  
Muslim, bowing to Thy (Will),  
And show us our places for  
The celebration of (due) rites,  
And turn unto us (in Mercy),  
For Thou art the Oft-Returning,  
Most Merciful

- 129 "Our Lord! send amongst them  
An Apostle of their own,  
Who shall rehearse Thy Signs  
To them and instruct them

لِلظَّالِمِينَ وَالْعَافِينَ وَالزُّكَّامِ  
الشُّجُودِ ○

١٢٦- وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَبِّ اجْعَلْ هَذَا بَلَدًا  
أَمِنًا وَارْزُقْ أَهْلَهُ مِنَ الثَّمَرَاتِ  
مَنْ آمَنَ مِنْهُمْ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ  
قَالَ وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَأُمَتِّعُهُ قَلِيلًا  
ثُمَّ أَصْطَرُّهُ إِلَىٰ عَذَابِ النَّارِ  
وَيُشْسِ النَّصِيرُ ○

١٢٧- وَإِذْ يَرْفَعُ إِبْرَاهِيمُ الْقَوَاعِدَ مِنَ  
الْبَيْتِ وَإِسْمَاعِيلُ  
رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا  
إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ○

١٢٨- رَبَّنَا وَاجْعَلْنَا مُسْلِمَيْنِ لَكَ  
وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِنَا أُمَّةً مُّسْلِمَةً لَّكَ  
وَأَرِنَا مَوَاسِكَنَا وَتُبْ عَلَيْنَا  
إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ ○

١٢٩- رَبَّنَا وَابْعَثْ فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا مِنْهُمْ  
يَتْلُوا عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِكَ

126 Four rites are here enumerated which have now acquired a technical meaning (1) Compassing the sacred territory or going round the Ka ba *Tawāf* There are special guides who take pilgrims and visitors round (2) Retiring to the place as a spiritual retreat for contemplation and prayer *I tihāf* (3) The posture of bending the back in prayer *Rukū* (4) The posture of prostrating oneself on the ground in prayer *Sujūd* The protection of the holy territory is for all but special cleanliness and purity is required for the sake of the devotees who undertake these rites

127 The root *salama* in the word Islam implies (among other ideas) the idea of Peace and therefore when Mecca is the city of Islam it is also the City of Peace The same root occurs in the latter part of the name Jerusalem, the Jewish City of Peace When the day of Jerusalem passed (see verse 134 or 141 below) Mecca became the New Jerusalem —or rather the old and original 'City of Peace' restored and made universal

128 The territory of Mecca is barren and rocky compared with say, Tāif, a city 70-75 miles east of Mecca A prayer for the prosperity of Mecca therefore includes a prayer for the good things of material life This is the literal meaning But note that the opposition in this verse is between the fruits of the Garden for the righteous and the torments of the Fire for the evil ones—a spiritual allegory of great force and aptness

In Scripture and Wisdom,  
And sanctify them.  
For Thou art the Exalted in Might,  
The Wise " 129

وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ  
إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ۝

## SECTION 16.

130 And who turns away  
From the religion of Abraham  
But such as debase their souls  
With folly? Him We chose <sup>130</sup>  
And rendered pure in this world  
And he will be in the Hereafter  
In the ranks of the Righteous

۱۳۰- وَمَنْ يَرْغَبْ عَنْ مِلَّةِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ  
إِلَّا مَنْ سَفِهَ نَفْسَهُ وَلَقَدْ اصْطَفَيْنَاهُ  
فِي الدُّنْيَا وَإِنَّهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ لَمِنَ  
الصَّالِحِينَ ۝

131 Behold! his Lord said  
To him "Bow (thy will to Me) "  
He said "I bow (my will)  
To the Lord and Cherisher  
Of the Universe "

۱۳۱- إِنْ قَالَ لَهُ رَبُّهُ  
أَسْلَمْ  
قَالَ أَسْلَمْتُ لِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ۝

132 And this was the legacy  
That Abraham left to his sons,  
And so did Jacob,  
"Oh my sons! God hath chosen  
The Faith for you, then die not  
Except in the Faith of Islam "

۱۳۲- وَوَضَّيْ بِهَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ نَبِيَّهُ وَيَعْقُوبُ  
يَسْتَبْقِ إِنْ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَى لَكُمْ الدِّينَ  
فَلَا تَكُونُوا إِلَّا وَآنتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ ۝

133 Were ye witnesses <sup>131</sup>  
When Death appeared before  
Jacob?  
Behold, he said to his sons  
"What will ye worship after me? "  
They said "We shall worship

۱۳۳- أَمْ كُنْتُمْ شُهَدَاءَ إِذْ حَضَرَ يَعْقُوبَ  
الْمَوْتُ إِذْ قَالَ لِبَنِيهِ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ  
مِنْ بَعْدِي ۖ قَالُوا نَعْبُدُ إِلَهَكَ وَ

129 How beautiful this prayer is and how aptly it comes in here in the argument! Such Paganism or star worship or planet worship as there was in Abraham's time was first cleared out of Mecca by Abraham. This is the chief meaning of sanctification or purification in 11 125 although of course physical cleanliness is (in physical conditions) a necessary element of purification in the higher sense. Abraham and his elder son Ismā'il then built the Ka'ba and established the rites and usages of the sacred city. He was thus the founder of the original Islam (which is as old as mankind) in Arabia. As becomes a devout man he offers and dedicates the work to God in humble supplication addressing Him as the All Hearing and the All Knowing. He then asks for a blessing on himself and his progeny generally, both the children of his eldest born Ismā'il and his younger son Isaac. With prophetic vision he foresees that there will be corruption and backsliding in both branches of his family. Mecca will house 360 idols and Jerusalem will become a harlot city (Ezekiel xvi 15) a city of abomination. But the light of Islam will shine and reclaim the lost people in both branches and indeed in all the world. So he prays for God's mercy addressing Him as the Oft Returning Most Merciful. And finally he foresees in Mecca an Apostle teaching the people as one of their own, and in their own beautiful Arabic language he asks for a blessing on Muḥammad's ministry, appealing to the Power and Wisdom of God.

130 *istafa* chose chose because of purity chose and purified. It is the same root from which *Muḥammad* is derived, one of the titles of Muḥammad.

131 The whole of the Children of Israel are called to witness one of their slogans, that they worshipped the God of their fathers. The idea in their minds got narrowed down to that of a tribal God. But they are reminded that their ancestors had the principle of Islam in them – the worship of the One True and Universal God. The death bed scene is described in Jewish tradition.

Thy God and the God of thy  
fathers,<sup>132</sup>—  
Of Abraham, Ismā'il, and Isaac,—  
The One (True) God  
To Him we bow (in Islām) "

- 134 That was a People that hath  
Passed away They shall reap  
The fruit of what they did,  
And ye of what ye do!  
Of their merits  
There is no question in your case!<sup>133</sup>

- 135 They say "Become Jews  
Or Christians if ye would be guided  
(To salvation)" Say thou  
"Nay!" (I would rather) the  
Religion  
Of Abraham the True,<sup>134</sup>  
And he joined not gods with God "

- 136 Say ye "We believe  
In God, and the revelation  
Given to us, and to Abraham,  
Ismā'il, Isaac, Jacob,  
And the Tribes, and that given  
To Moses and Jesus, and that given  
To (all) Prophets from their Lord  
We make no difference  
Between one and another of them  
And we bow to God (in Islām)"<sup>135</sup>

- 137 So if they believe  
As ye believe, they are indeed  
On the right path, but if  
They turn back, it is they

إِلَهَ آبَائِكَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ  
إِلَهًا وَاحِدًا

وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ ○

١٣٤- تِلْكَ أُمَّةٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ لَهَا مَا  
كَسَبَتْ وَ لَكُمْ مَا كَسَبْتُمْ وَلَا تُسْأَلُونَ  
عَمَّا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ○

١٣٥- وَ قَالُوا كُونُوا هُودًا أَوْ نَصَارَى  
تَهْتَدُوا قُلْ  
بَلْ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا  
وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ○

١٣٦- قُولُوا آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَمَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْنَا وَمَا  
أُنْزِلَ إِلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ وَ  
يَعْقُوبَ وَالْأَسْبَاطِ وَمَا أُوتِيَ مُوسَى وَ  
عِيسَى وَمَا أُوتِيَ النَّبِيُّونَ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ لَا نُفَرِّقُ  
بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِنْهُمْ وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ ○

١٣٧- فَإِنْ آمَنُوا بِمِثْلِ مَا آمَنْتُمْ بِهِ  
 فَقَدْ اهْتَدَوْا وَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَلَنُكَذِّبَنَّ

132 Fathers means ancestors and includes uncles grand uncles as well as direct ascendants

133 I have made a free paraphrase of what would read literally "Ye shall not be asked about what they used to do" On the Day of Judgment each soul would have to answer for its own deeds it cannot claim merit from others nor be answerable for the crimes or sins of others Here the argument is if the Jews or Christians claim the merits of Father Abraham and the Patriarchs or of Jesus, we cannot follow them Because there were righteous men in the past it cannot help us unless we are ourselves righteous The doctrine of personal responsibility is a cardinal feature of Islām

134 Hanīf inclined to right opinion orthodox (in the literal meaning of the Greek words) firm in faith sound and well balanced true Perhaps the last word True sums up most of the other shades The Jews though taught Unity went after false gods and the Christians invented the Trinity or borrowed it from Paganism We go back to the pure Hanīf doctrine of Abraham to live and die in faith in the One True God

135 Here we have the Creed of Islām to believe in (1) the One Universal God (2) the Message to us through Muḥammad and the Signs (āyāt) as interpreted on the basis of personal responsibility (3) the Message delivered by other Teachers in the past These are mentioned in three groups (1) Abraham Ismā'il Isaac Jacob and the Tribes of these Abraham had apparently a Book (lxxxvii, 19) and the others followed his tradition (2) Moses and Jesus who each left a scripture these scriptures are still extant though not in their pristine form and (3) other scriptures Prophets or Messengers of God, not specifically mentioned in the Qur'ān (xl 78). We make no difference between any of these Their Message (in essentials) was one, and that is the basis of Islām

Who are in schism, but God will  
Suffice thee as against them,<sup>136</sup>  
And He is the All-Hearing,  
The All-Knowing

- 138 (Our religion is)  
The Baptism of God <sup>137</sup>  
And who can baptize better  
Than God? And it is He  
Whom we worship

- 139 Say Will ye dispute  
With us about God, seeing  
That He is our Lord  
And your Lord, that we  
Are responsible for our doings  
And ye for yours, and that  
We are sincere (in our faith)  
In him?

- 140 Or <sup>138</sup> do ye say that  
Abraham, Ismā'il, Isaac,  
Jacob and the Tribes were  
Jews or Christians?  
Say Do ye know better  
Than God? Ah! who  
Is more unjust than those  
Who conceal the testimony  
They have from God?  
But God is not unmindful  
Of what ye do!

- 141 That was a people that hath  
Passed away They shall reap  
The fruit of what they did,  
And ye of what ye do!

<sup>1</sup> Of their merits

<sup>30</sup> There is no question in your case <sup>139</sup>

هُم فِي شِقَاقٍ فَسَيَكْفِيكَهُمُ اللَّهُ  
وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ۝

۱۳۸- صِبْغَةَ اللَّهِ وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ مِنَ اللَّهِ  
صِبْغَةً وَنَحْنُ لَهُ عِيدُونَ ۝

۱۳۹- قُلْ أَتُحَاجُّونَنَا فِي اللَّهِ  
وَهُوَ رَبُّنَا وَرَبُّكُمْ  
وَلَنَا أَعْمَالُنَا وَلَكُمْ أَعْمَالُكُمْ  
وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُخْلِصُونَ ۝

۱۴۰- أَمْ تَقُولُونَ إِنَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ  
وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَالْأَسْطَاطَ كَانُوا يَهُودًا  
أَوْ نَصَارَى قُلْ ءَأَنْتُمْ أَعْلَمُ أَمِ اللَّهُ  
وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ كَتَمَ شَهَادَةً عِنْدَهُ  
مِنَ اللَّهِ ۝

وَمَا اللَّهُ بِعَاقِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ۝

۱۴۱- تِلْكَ أُمَّةٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ

لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَلَكُمْ مَا كَسَبْتُمْ

۝ وَلَا تَسْأَلُونَهُ عَمَّا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ۝

136 We are thus in the true line of those who follow the one and indivisible Message of the One God wherever delivered. If others narrow it or corrupt it it is they who have left the faith and created a division or schism. But God sees and knows all. And He will protect His own and His support will be infinitely more precious than the support which men can give.

137 *Ṣibgat* baptism the root meaning implies a dye or colour. Apparently the Arab Christians mixed a dye or colour in the baptismal water signifying that the baptized person got a new colour in life. We do not believe that it is necessary to be baptised to be saved. Our higher baptism is the 'Baptism' of God by which we take on a colour (symbolically) of God and absorb His goodness in us.

The accusative case of *Ṣibgat* puts it in apposition to *millat* (religion) in 11:135.

138 The alternative is with the question in the last verse. Do you dispute with us although we worship the same God as you and claim that ours is the same religion as that of your ancestors? Or do you really assert that Abraham and his sons and his sons' sons who founded the Tribes long before Moses followed your Jewish religion as you know it? History of course proves that claim absurd. If the Christians claim that these Patriarchs knew of and followed the teaching of Jesus the claim is still more absurd—except in the sense of Islam that God's teaching is one in all ages.

139 Verse 134 began a certain argument which is now rounded off in the same words in this verse. To use a musical term the *motif* is now completed. The argument is that it is wrong to claim a monopoly for God's Message. It is the same for all peoples and in all ages if it undergoes local variations or variations according to times and seasons those variations pass away. This leads to the argument in the remainder of the Sūra that with the renewal of the Message and the birth of a new People, a new symbolism and new ordinances become appropriate, and they are now expounded.

C 49 — But those people have passed away,  
 (ii 142 167) Who promised to uphold the Law of God  
 Their progeny having been found  
 Unworthy, their place was taken  
 By a new people looking towards Mecca,—  
 A new people, with a new Messenger,  
 To bear witness to God's Law,  
 To proclaim the truth, maintain  
 His Symbols, and strive and fight  
 For Unity in God's Way

## SECTION 17

142 The Fools among the people<sup>140</sup>  
 Will say "What hath turned  
 Them from the Qibla<sup>141</sup> to which  
 They were used?" Say  
 To God belong both East and  
 West  
 He guideth whom He will  
 To a Way that is straight

143 Thus<sup>142</sup> have We made of you  
 An *Ummat* justly balanced,<sup>143</sup>  
 That ye might be witnesses<sup>144</sup>  
 As between the nations,

١٤٢- سَيَقُولُ السُّفَهَاءُ مِنَ النَّاسِ  
 مَا وَلَّهُمْ عَنِ قِبْلَتِهِمُ الَّتِي كَانُوا عَلَيْهَا  
 قُلْ لِلَّهِ الْمَشْرِقُ وَالْمَغْرِبُ  
 يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ

١٤٣- وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا  
 لِتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ

140 *Nās* = People the unthinking multitude that sway to and fro instead of being firm in God's Way. The reference here is to the idolaters the Hypocrites and the party of Jews who were constantly seeking to entangle in their talk Mustafā and his disciples in Medina even as the Pharisees and the Sadducees of Jesus's day tried to entangle Jesus (Matt xxii 15 23)

141 *Qibla* = the direction to which Muslims turn in prayer. Islam lays great stress on social prayer in order to emphasise our universal Brotherhood and mutual co-operation. For such prayer order punctuality precision symbolical postures and a common direction are essential so that the Imam (leader) and all his congregation may face one way and offer their supplications to God. In the early days before they were organised as a people they followed as a symbol for their Qibla the sacred city of Jerusalem sacred both to the Jews and the Christians the people of the Book. This symbolised their allegiance to the continuity of God's revelation. When despised and persecuted they were turned out of Mecca and arrived in Medina Mustafā under divine direction began to organise his people as an *Ummat* an independent people with laws and rituals of their own. At that stage the Kaba was established as a Qibla thus going back to the earliest centre with which the name of Abraham was connected and traditionally also the name of Adam. Jerusalem still remained (and remains) sacred in the eyes of Islam on account of its past but Islam is a progressive religion and its new symbolism enabled it to shake off the tradition of a dead past and usher in the era of untrammelled freedom dear to the spirit of Arabia. The change took place about 16½ months after Hijrat.

142 *Thus* By giving you a Qibla of your own most ancient in history and most modern as a symbol of your organisation as a new nation (*Ummat*)

143 *Justly balanced* The essence of Islam is to avoid all extravagances on either side. It is a sober practical religion. But the Arabic word (*wasaf*) also implies a touch of the literal meaning of Intermediacy. Geographically Arabia is in an intermediate position in the Old World as was proved in history by the rapid expansion of Islam, north south west and east.

144 *Witnesses* When two persons dispute they advance extravagant claims. A just witness comes between them and brings the light of reason to bear on them pruning all their selfish extravagances. So the mission of Islam is to curb for instance the extreme formalism of the Mosaic law and the extreme "otherworldliness" professed by Christianity. The witness must be unselfish equipped with first hand knowledge and ready to intervene in the cause of justice. Such is the position claimed by Islam among rival systems. Similarly, within Islam itself, the position of witness to whom disputants can appeal is held by Muḥammad Mustafā.

And the Apostle a witness  
As between yourselves ,  
And We appointed the Qibla  
To which thou wast used,  
To test those who followed  
The Apostle from those  
Who would turn on their heels <sup>145</sup>  
(From the Faith) Indeed it was  
(A change) momentous, except  
To those guided by God  
And never would God  
Make your faith of no effect <sup>146</sup>  
For God is to all people  
Most surely full of kindness,  
Most Merciful

144 We see the turning  
Of thy face (for guidance)  
To the heavens <sup>147</sup> now  
Shall We turn thee  
To a Qibla that shall  
Please thee Turn then  
Thy face in the direction  
Of the sacred Mosque <sup>148</sup>  
Wherever ye are, turn  
Your faces in that direction

وَيَكُونُ الرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا  
وَمَا جَعَلْنَا الْقِبْلَةَ الَّتِي كُنْتَ عَلَيْهَا  
إِلَّا لِنَعْلَمَ مَنْ يَتَّبِعُ الرَّسُولَ  
مِمَّنْ يَنْقَلِبُ عَلَى عَقْبَيْهِ  
وَإِنْ كَانَتْ لَكَبِيرَةً إِلَّا عَلَى الَّذِينَ هَدَى  
اللَّهُ  
وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُضِلَّ عِبَادَهُ  
إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِالنَّاسِ لَرَّوُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ  
١٤٣- قَدْ رَأَى نَقْلَ وَجْهِكَ فِي السَّاءِ  
فَلَوْلِيَّتَكَ قَوْلُهُ تَرْصُهَا  
قَوْلَ وَجْهِكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ  
وَحَيْثُ مَا كُنْتُمْ فَوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ شَطْرَهُ  
وَإِنَّ الدِّينَ أَوْثَرُ الْكِتَابِ لِيَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّهُ

145 The Qibla to Jerusalem might itself have seemed strange to the Arabs and the change from it to the Ka ba might have seemed strange after they had become used to the other. In reality one direction or another of east or west in itself did not matter as God is in all places and is independent of Time and Place. What mattered was the sense of discipline on which Islam lays so much stress which of us is willing to follow the directions of the chosen Apostle of God? Mere quibblers about non essential matters are tested by this

146 What became of prayer with the Jerusalem Qibla? It was equally efficacious before the new Qibla was ordained. God regards our faith: every act of true and genuine faith is efficacious with Him even if formalists pick holes in such acts

147 This shows the sincere desire of Mustafa to seek light from above in the matter of the Qibla. Until the organisation of his own People into a well knit community with its distinctive laws and ordinances he followed a practice based on the fact that the Jews and Christians looked upon Jerusalem as a sacred city. But there was no universal Qibla among them. Some Jews turned towards Jerusalem especially during the Captivity as we shall see later. At the time of our Prophet Jerusalem was in the hands of the Byzantine Empire which was Christian. But the Christians oriented their churches to the East (hence the word orientation) which is a point of the compass and not the direction of any sacred place. The fact of the altar being in the East does not mean that every worshipper has his face to the east for according at least to modern practice the seats in a church are so placed that different worshippers may face in different directions. The Preacher of Unity naturally wanted in this as in other matters a symbol of complete unity and his heart was naturally delighted when the Qibla towards the Ka ba was settled. Its connection with Abraham gave it great antiquity its character of being an Arab centre made it appropriate when the Message came in Arabic and was preached through the union of the Arabs at the time it was adopted the little Muslim community was shut out of it being exiles in Medina but it became a symbol of hope and eventual triumph of which Muhammad lived to see the fulfilment and it also became the centre and gathering ground of all peoples in the universal pilgrimage which was instituted with it

148 The Sacred Mosque The Ka ba in the sacred city of Mecca. It is not correct to suggest that the command making the Ka ba the Qibla abrogates II 115 where it is stated that East and West belong to God and He is every where. This is perfectly true at all times before and after the institution of the Qibla. As if to emphasise this the same words about East and West are repeated in this very passage see II 142 above. Where the *Iqān* mentions *mansūkh* in this connection I am sorry I cannot follow that opinion, unless *mansūkh* is defined in a special way, as some of the commentators do



The people of the Book <sup>149</sup>  
 Know well that that is  
 The truth from their Lord  
 Nor is God unmindful  
 Of what they do

الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ  
 وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا يَعْمَلُونَ ٥

145 Even if thou wert to bring  
 To the people of the Book  
 All the Signs (together),  
 They would not follow  
 Thy Qibla, nor art thou  
 Going to follow their Qibla,  
 Nor indeed will they follow <sup>150</sup>  
 Each other's Qibla If thou  
 After the knowledge hath reached  
 thee,  
 Wert to follow their (vain)  
 Desires,—then wert thou  
 Indeed (clearly) in the wrong

١٢٥- وَلَئِنْ أَتَيْتَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ  
 بِكُلِّ آيَةٍ مَا تَتَّبِعُوا قِبْلَتَكَ  
 وَمَا أَنْتَ بِتَابِعٍ قِبْلَتَهُمْ  
 وَمَا بَعْضُهُمْ بِتَابِعٍ قِبْلَةَ نَعُوضٍ  
 وَلَئِنْ اتَّبَعْتَ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ  
 مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ  
 إِنَّكَ إِذًا لَمِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ ٥

146 The people of the Book  
 Know this as they know  
 Their own sons, <sup>151</sup> but some  
 Of them conceal the truth  
 Which they themselves know

١٢٦- الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعْتَهُمْ الْكِتَابَ يَعْرِفُونَهُ كَمَا  
 يَعْرِفُونَ آبَاءَهُمْ وَإِنَّ فَرِيقًا مِنْهُمْ  
 لَيَكْتُمُونَ الْحَقَّ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ ٥

147 The Truth is from thy Lord, <sup>152</sup>  
 So be not in doubt

١٢٧- الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكَ لَا تَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْمُتَرَدِّينَ ٥

149 Glimmerings of such a Qibla were already foreshadowed in Jewish and Christian practice but its universality was only perfected in Islam

150 See the first note to n 144 above

The Jews and Christians had a glimmering of the Qibla idea but in their attitude of self efficiency they were not likely to welcome the Qibla idea as perfected in Islam Nor is Islam after the fuller knowledge which it has received likely to revert to the uncertain imperfect and varying ideas of orientation held previously

A very clear glimpse of the old Jewish practice in the matter of the Qibla and the importance attached to it is found in the book of Daniel vi 10 Daniel was a righteous man of princely lineage and lived about 606—538 B C He was carried off to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar the Assyrian but was still living when Assyria was overthrown by the Medes and Persians In spite of the captivity of the Jews Daniel enjoyed the highest offices of state at Babylon but he was ever true to Jerusalem His enemies (under the Persian monarch) got a penal law passed against any one who asked a petition of any god or man for 30 days except the Persian King But Daniel continued true to Jerusalem His windows being open in his chamber towards Jerusalem he kneeled upon his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before his God as he did aforetime

151 The People of the Book should have known all this as well as they knew their own sons as their past traditions and teaching should have made them receptive of the new Message Some commentators construe the demonstrative pronoun this to refer to the Apostle In that case the interpretation would be The People of the Book know Muhammad as well as they know their own sons they know him to be true and upright they know him to be in the line of Abraham they know him to correspond to the description of the prophet foretold among themselves, but selfishness induces some of them to act against their own knowledge and conceal the truth

152 Truth only comes from God and it remains truth however men might try to conceal it or throw doubts on it



## SECTION 18

148 **To** each is a goal  
To which God<sup>153</sup> turns him,  
Then strive together (as in a race)  
Towards all that is good  
Wheresoever ye are,  
God will bring you  
Together For God  
Hath power over all things

149 From whencesoever  
Thou startest forth,<sup>154</sup> turn  
Thy face in the direction  
Of the Sacred Mosque,  
That is indeed the truth  
From thy Lord And God  
Is not unmindful  
Of what ye do

150 So from whencesoever  
Thou startest forth, turn  
Thy face in the direction  
Of the Sacred Mosque,  
And wheresoever ye are,  
Turn your face thither  
That there be no ground  
Of dispute against you  
Among the people,  
Except those of them that are  
Bent on wickedness, so fear  
Them not, but fear Me,  
And that I may complete  
My favours on you, and ye  
May (consent to) be guided,

۱۴۸- وَلِكُلٍّ وِجْهَةٌ هُوَ مُوَلِّيهَا فَاسْتَبِقُوا  
الْحَيَاتِ  
إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ۝  
إِنَّ مَا تَكُونُوا يَأْتِي بِكُمْ اللَّهُ جَمِيعًا

۱۴۹- وَمِنْ حَيْثُ خَرَجْتَ قَوْلٍ  
وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ  
وَلِئَلَّا لَاحِقَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ  
وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ۝

۱۵۰- وَمِنْ حَيْثُ خَرَجْتَ قَوْلٍ  
وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ  
وَحَيْثُ مَا كُنْتُمْ  
قُولُوا وَجُوهَكُمْ شَطْرَهُ  
لِيَلَّا يَكُونَ لِلنَّاسِ عَلَيْكُمْ حُجَّةٌ  
إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا مِنْهُمْ  
فَلَا تَخْشَوْهُمْ وَاخْشَوْنِي  
وَلِئَلَّا يَغْتَبِىَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَعَلَيْكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ ۝

153 The question is how we are to construe the pronoun *huwa* in the original 'The alternative translation would be 'To each is a goal to which he turns'

The simile of life being a race in which we all zealously run forward to the one goal viz the goal of good may be applied individually and nationally This supplies another argument of the Ka ba Qibla viz the unity of goal with diversity of races traditions and temperaments

154 The simile of a race is continued and so the Qibla command is repeated from that point of view In v 144 it was mentioned as the new symbol of the new nation (Muslim) now it is shown as the symbol of Good at which we should all aim from whichever point we started e.g. as Jews or Christians or our individual point of view the Qibla will unite us as a symbol of the Goal of the Future In v 150 below it is repeated first for the individual on the ground of uniformity and the removal of all occasions of dispute and argument and secondly for the Muslim people, on the same ground as a matter of discipline There is another little harmony in the matter of the repetitions Note that the race and starting point argument begins at v 149 and is rounded off in the first part of v 150 while the national and general argument beginning at v 144 is rounded off in the latter part of v 150 The latter argument includes the former and is more widely worded wheresoever ye are which in the Arabic expression would imply three things, in whatever circumstances ye are or at whatever time ye are or in whatever place ye are I have spoken before of a sort of musical harmony in verbal repetitions here there is a sort of pictorial harmony, as of a larger circle symmetrically including a smaller concentric circle

- 151 A similar (favour  
Have ye already received)<sup>155</sup>  
In that We have sent  
Among you an Apostle  
Of your own, rehearsing to you  
Our Signs, and sanctifying  
You, and instructing you  
In Scripture and Wisdom,  
And in new Knowledge

۱۵۱- كَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا فِيكُمْ رَسُولًا مِّنكُمْ  
يَتْلُوا عَلَيْكُمْ آيَاتِنَا  
وَيُرَكِّبُكُمْ وَيُعَلِّمُكُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ  
فِيهَا وَيُعَلِّمُكُم مَّا لَمْ تَكُونُوا تَعْلَمُونَ ۝

- 152 Then do ye remember <sup>156</sup>  
Me, I will remember  
You Be grateful to Me,  
And reject not Faith

۱۵۲- فَادْكُرُونِي أَذْكُرْكُمْ  
وَاشْكُرُوا لِي وَلَا تَكْفُرُونِ ۝

#### SECTION 19

- 153 <sup>157</sup> Oh ye who believe! seek help  
With patient Perseverance <sup>157</sup>  
And Prayer for God is with  
those  
Who patiently persevere

۱۵۳- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اسْتَعِينُوا  
بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلَاةِ  
إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ ۝

- 154 And say not of those  
Who are slain in the way <sup>158</sup>

۱۵۴- وَلَا تَقُولُوا لِمَن يُقْتَلُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ

155 This verse should be read with 150 of which the sentence is here completed. The argument is that in the grant of the Ka'ba Qibla God was perfecting religion and fulfilling the prayer for the future made by Abraham. That prayer was threefold (1) That Mecca should be made a sacred Sanctuary (ii 126) (2) That a truly believing (Muslim) nation should be raised with places of devotion there (ii 128) and (3) that an Apostle should be sent among the Arabs with certain qualities (ii 129) which are set out there and again repeated here to complete the argument.

156 The word remember is too pale a word for *zikir* which has now acquired a large number of associations in our religious literature especially Sufi literature. In its verbal signification it implies to remember to praise by frequently mentioning to rehearse to celebrate or commemorate, to make much of to cherish the memory of as a precious possession. In Sufi devotions *zikir* represents both a solemn ritual and a spiritual state of mind or heart in which the devotee seeks to realise the presence of God. Thus there is *zikir* of the mind and *zikir* of the heart. For beginners the one may lead to the other but in many cases the two may be simultaneous. There is a subtler distinction between the *zikir* that is open and the *zikir* that is secret corresponding to the two doors of the heart the fleshly and the spiritual. In English some account (very imperfect) of *zikir* will be found in Hughes's Dictionary of Islam covering over 14 columns.

From here on to v 167 there is a great deal of mystic doctrine. That it is linked with the institution of the Qibla shows that the Qibla is itself connected with a great many root ideas of the mystical interpretation of Unity.

157 See ii 45 and n. An additional meaning implied in *sabr* is self restraint. *Ḥaqqānī* defines it in his *Tafsīr* as following Reason and restraining Fear Anger and Desire. What can be a higher reward for patience perseverance self restraint and constancy than that God should be with us? For this promise opens the door to every kind of spiritual well being.

158 The patient perseverance and prayer mentioned in the last verse is not mere passivity. It is active striving in the way of Truth which is the way of God. Such striving is the spending of one's self in God's way either through our property or through our own lives or the lives of those nearest and dearest to us or it may be the loss of all the fruits of a lifetime's labour not only in material goods but in some intellectual or moral gain some position which seemed in our eyes to be eminently desirable in itself but which we must cheerfully sacrifice if necessary for the Cause. With such sacrifice our apparent loss may be our real gain. He that loses his life may really gain it and the rewards or 'fruits' that seem lost were mere impediments on our path to real inward progress.

These extreme sacrifices must be made under the orders and instructions of a righteous Imam who can see the whole field of spiritual and physical warfare and judge justly of their necessity. Otherwise there is no inherent virtue in mere sacrifice as such or when exercised at the whim of an individual. Courage (the resistance to the test of Fear) and Self denial (the resistance to the test of Hunger or Desire), are also if they are to be virtues, subject to similar conditions.

Of God " They are dead "  
Nay, they are living,  
Though ye perceive (them) not

- 155 Be sure we shall test you  
With something of fear  
And hunger, some loss  
In goods or lives or the fruits  
(Of your toil), but give  
Glad tidings<sup>159</sup> to those  
Who patiently persevere,—

- 156 Who say, when afflicted  
With calamity " To God  
We belong, and to Him  
Is our return " —

- 157 They are those on whom  
(Descend) blessings from God,  
And Mercy,  
And they are the ones  
That receive guidance

- 158 Behold<sup>1</sup> Safa and Marwa  
Are among the Symbols<sup>160</sup>  
Of God So if those who visit  
The House<sup>161</sup> in the Season  
Or at other times,  
Should compass them round,  
It is no sin in them  
And if any one obeyeth his own

أَمْوَاتٌ

بَلْ أَحْيَاءُ وَلَكِنْ لَا تَشْعُرُونَ ٥

١٥٥- وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ

مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ

وَالْأَنفُسِ وَالْمَرْثِ

وَبَشِيرِ الصَّابِرِينَ ٥

١٥٦- الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُمُ مُصِيبَةٌ

قَالُوا إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ ٥

١٥٧- أُولَئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَاتٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ

وَرَحْمَةٌ

وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُهْتَدُونَ ٥

١٥٨- إِنَّ الصَّفَا وَالْمَرْوَةَ مِن شَعَائِرِ اللَّهِ

فَمَن حَجَّ الْبَيْتَ أَوْ اعْتَمَرَ

فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِ أَن يَطَّوَّفَ بِهِمَا

وَمَن تَطَوَّعَ خَيْرًا

159 The glad tidings are the blessings of God in v 157 or (which is the same thing) the promise in v 153 that God will be with them

160 The virtue of patient perseverance in faith leads to the mention of two symbolic monuments of that virtue. These are the two little hills of Safa and Marwa now absorbed in the city of Mecca and close to the well of Zam zam. Here according to tradition the lady Hajra mother of the infant Isma'il prayed for water in the parched desert and in her eager quest round these hills she found her prayer answered and saw the Zam zam spring. Unfortunately the pagan Arabs had placed a male and a female idol here and their gross and superstitious rites caused offence to the early Muslims. They felt some hesitation in going round these places during the pilgrimage. As a matter of fact they should have known that the Ka'ba (the House of God) had been itself defiled with idols and was sanctified again by the purity of Muhammad's life and teaching. The lesson is that the most sacred things may be turned to the basest uses that we are not therefore necessarily to ban a thing misused that if our intentions and life are pure God will recognise them even if the world cast stones at us because of some evil associations which they join with what we do or with the people we associate with or with the places which claim our reverence.

161 The House = the Sacred Mosque the Ka'ba. The Season of regular Hajj culminates in the visit to 'Arafat on the ninth day of the month of Zul hajj followed by the circumambulation of the Ka'ba. A visit to the Sacred Mosque and the performance of the rites of pilgrimage at any other time is called an Umra. The symbolic rites are the same in either case except that the 'Arafat rites are omitted in the Umra. The Safa and Marwa are included among the Monuments as pointing to one of the highest of Muslim virtues.

Impulse to Good,—<sup>162</sup>  
Be sure that God  
Is He Who recogniseth  
And knoweth

قَالَ اللَّهُ شَاكِرٌ عَلِيمٌ ۝

159 Those who conceal  
The clear (Signs) We have  
Sent down, and the Guidance,  
After We have made it  
Clear for the People  
In the Book,— on them  
Shall be God's curse,  
And the curse of those  
Entitled to curse,—<sup>163</sup>

١٥٩- إِنْ الَّذِينَ يَكْتُمُونَ  
مَا أُنْزِلَ مِنَ الْبَيِّنَاتِ وَالْهُدَى  
مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا بَيَّنَّاهُ لِلنَّاسِ فِي الْكِتَابِ  
أُولَئِكَ يَلْعَنُهُمُ اللَّهُ  
وَيَلْعَنُهُمُ اللَّعْنُونَ ۝

160 Except those who repent  
And make amends  
And openly declare (themselves)  
To them I turn,  
For I am Oft-returning,  
Most Merciful

١٦٠- إِلَّا الَّذِينَ تَابُوا وَأَصْلَحُوا وَبَيَّنَّاهُ  
فَأُولَئِكَ أَتُوبُ عَلَيْهِمْ  
وَإِنَّا التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ ۝

161 Those who reject Faith,  
And die rejecting,—  
On them is God's curse,  
And the curse of angels,  
And of all mankind,

١٦١- إِنْ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَمَاتُوا وَهُمْ كُفَّارٌ  
أُولَئِكَ عَلَيْهِمُ لعنةُ اللَّهِ  
وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ ۝

162 They will abide therein <sup>164</sup>  
Their penalty will not  
Be lightened, nor will  
Respite be their (lot)

١٦٢- خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا لَا يُخَفَّفُ عَنْهُمْ الْعَذَابُ  
وَلَا هُمْ يُنْظَرُونَ ۝

163 And your God  
Is One God  
There is no god  
But He,

١٦٣- وَإِلَهُكُمْ إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ  
لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ

162 The impulse should be to Good, if once we are sure of this, we must obey it without hesitation whatever people may say

163 Those entitled to curse i.e. angels and mankind (see v 161 below) the cursed ones will deprive themselves of the protection of God and of the angels who are the Powers of God and of the good wishes of mankind because by contumaciously rejecting Faith they not only sin against God but are false to their own manhood which God created in the best of moulds' (Q. xiv 4) The terrible curses denounced in the Old Testament are set out in Deut xxviii 15-68 There is one difference Here it is for the deliberate rejection of Faith a theological term for the denying of our higher nature There it is for a breach of the least part of the ceremonial Law

164 Therein—in the curse A curse is not a matter of words it is a terrible spiritual state, opposite to the state of Grace Can man curse? Not of course in the same sense in which we speak of the curse of God A mere verbal curse is of no effect Hence the English saying "A causeless curse will not come" But if men are oppressed or unjustly treated their cries can ascend to God in prayer, and then it becomes God's wrath or curse the deprivation of God's Grace as regards the wrong doer

Most Gracious,  
Most Merciful <sup>185</sup>

الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ ٥

## SECTION 20

164 Behold <sup>1</sup> In the creation  
Of the heavens and the earth,  
In the alternation  
Of the Night and the Day,  
In the sailing of the ships  
Through the Ocean  
For the profit of mankind,  
In the rain which God  
Sends down from the skies,  
And the life which it gives  
To an earth that is dead,  
In the beasts of all kinds  
That He scatters  
Through the earth,  
In the change of the winds,  
And the clouds which they  
Trail like their slaves  
Between the sky and the earth,—  
Here indeed are Signs  
For a people that are wise <sup>166</sup>

١٦٤- إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ  
وَٱخْتِلَافِ ٱلْأَيَّامِ وَٱلْأَلْهٰكِ  
وَٱلْفَلَإِ ٱلَّذِى تَجْرِى فِى ٱلْبَحْرِ  
بِمَآ يَنْفَعُ ٱلنَّاسَ وَمَآ أُنزِلَ ٱللَّهُ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ  
مِنْ مَّآءٍ  
فَٱلْحَيَاةِ بِهَآ ٱلْأَرْضُ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا  
وَبَثِّ فِىهَا مِنْ كُلِّ دَآبَّةٍ  
وَتَصْرِيفِ الرِّيحِ وَٱلسَّحَابِ  
ٱلْمُسْتَخَرِّ بَيْنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ  
لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ ٥

165 Yet there are men  
Who take (for worship)  
Others besides God,  
As equal (with God)

١٦٥- وَمِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ مَن يَتَّخِذُ مِنْ دُونِ  
ٱللَّهِ أَندَادًا

165 Where the terrible consequences of evil i.e. the rejection of God are mentioned there is always stress laid on God's attributes of Grace and Mercy. In this case Unity is also stressed because we have just been told about the Qibla symbol of unity and are about to pass to the theme of unity in diversity in Nature and in the social laws of human society.

166 This magnificent Nature passage stands out like a hill in a landscape enhancing the beauty of our view and preparing us for the every day laws and ordinances which follow.

Note its literary architecture. God is one and among His wondrous Signs is the unity of design in the widest diversity of Nature. The Signs are taken from the features of beauty, power and utility to man himself and lead up to an appeal to Man's own intelligence and wisdom. We begin with the glory of the heavens and the earth, the wide spaces covered by man's imagination remote and yet so near to his own life. The most striking every day phenomenon resulting from the interrelations of the heavens and the earth is the alternation of day and night regular and yet changing in duration with the Seasons and the latitudes of our globe. The night for rest and the day for work and we can think of the work in terms of nature's beauty, the stately ships 'flowing' (as the original text has it) across the seas for communications and merchandise as between men and men. The seas thus serve us no less than land and the give and take as between sea, sky and land is further exemplified by the rain. The rain leads to the fertility of land and here we are reminded of the contrast between the Winter's death of Nature and her revivification in the Spring. Here we are reminded of agriculture and the use we make of cattle and all kinds of living creatures. The word translated 'beasts' has a wide meaning including crawling creatures, insects, etc.—all contributing to the round of Nature's operations. This leads us on to the wonderful winds, the region of the air which man is just beginning to explore and navigate. The personified winds drive the clouds in the sky like slaves. Here is another aspect of clouds besides that of giving rain. The fleecy clouds are things of sunset beauty; at mid day they temper the glare of the sun; at all times they affect radiation and other processes going on in the sky. So we come back to the sky, rounding off the argument, and correlating our human life with the Will and Power of God, if we had the wisdom to see!

They love them  
As they should love God  
But those of Faith are  
Overflowing in their love  
For God  
If only the unrighteous  
Could see, they would see  
The Penalty that to God  
Belongs all power, and God  
Will strongly enforce  
The Penalty <sup>167</sup>

يُحِبُّوهُمْ كَحُبِّ اللَّهِ  
وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِلَّهِ  
وَلَوْ يَرَى الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا إِذْ يَرَوْنَ الْعَذَابَ  
أَنَّ الْقُوَّةَ لِلَّهِ جَمِيعًا  
وَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعَذَابِ ○

166 Then would those  
Who are followed  
Clear themselves of those  
Who follow (them)  
They would see the Penalty,  
And all relations  
Between them would be cut off

١٦٦- رَادُّ نَبَأِ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوا مِنَ الَّذِينَ  
اتَّبَعُوا وَرَأَوْا الْعَذَابَ  
وَتَقَطَّعَتْ بِهِمُ الْأَسْبَابُ ○

167 And those who followed  
Would say " If only  
We had one more chance,  
We would clear ourselves  
Of them, as they have  
Cleared themselves of us "  
Thus will God show them  
(The fruits of) their deeds  
As (nothing but) regrets  
Nor will there be a way  
For them out of the Fire <sup>168</sup>

١٦٧- وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوا  
لَوْ أَنَّ لَنَا كَرَّةٌ فَنَتَمَكَّنُ مِنْهُمْ كَمَثَلِ الزُّوْ  
رِ  
كَذَلِكَ بُرِّئَهُمُ اللَّهُ أَعْمَالَهُمْ حَسِرَتٍ  
عَلَيْهِمْ  
وَمَا هُمْ بِمُخْرِجِينَ مِنَ النَّارِ

C 50 -- The Society thus organised

(" 168 242 ) Must live under laws

That would guide their every-day life,—

Based on eternal principles

Of righteousness and fair dealing,

167 Everything around and within us points to unity of purpose and design—points to God Yet there are foolish persons (unrighteous=those who deliberately use the choice given them to go wrong) They think something else is equal to God Perhaps they even do lip service to God but their heart is in their fetish—unlike the heart of the righteous who are wholly devoted and absorbed in the love of God If only the unrighteous could see the consequences they would see the terrible Penalty and that all Power is in God's hands not in that of any one else Who are these others who are used as fetishes by the misguided? It may be (1) creatures of their own imagination or of their faculties misused the idea lying behind Idols is akin to this for no intelligent idol worshipper owns to worshipping stocks and stones or (2) good leaders whose names have been misused out of perversity to erect them to a position of equality with God or (3) Powers of evil that deliberately mislead When it comes to the inevitable consequences of blasphemy and the rejection of God the eyes of all are opened and these false and artificial relations dissolve, The idea which was created into a fetish disowns its follower &c is seen to have no reasonable basis in the life of the follower and the follower is forced to renounce it as false The good leaders whose names were misused would of course disown the misuse of their names, and the evil ones would take an unholy delight in exposing the facts The Reality is now irresistible but alas! at what cost?

168. Our deeds are irrevocable and we must pass through the Fire of repentance and regrets

Cleanliness and sobriety,  
 Honesty and helpfulness,  
 One to another,—yet shaped  
 Into concrete forms, to suit  
 Times and circumstances,  
 And the varying needs  
 Of average men and women  
 The food to be clean and wholesome ,  
 Blood feuds to be abolished ,  
 The rights and duties of heirs  
 To be recognised after death,  
 Not in a spirit of Formalism,  
 But to help the weak and the needy  
 And check all selfish wrong doing ,  
 Self-denial to be learnt by fasting ,  
 The courage to fight in defence  
 Of right, to be defined ,  
 The Pilgrimage to be sanctified  
 As a symbol of unity ,  
 Charity and help to the poor  
 To be organised , unseemly riot  
 And drink and gambling  
 To be banished , orphans to be protected ,  
 Marriage, divorce and widowhood  
 To be regulated, and the rights of women,  
 Apt to be trampled under foot,  
 Now clearly affirmed

## SECTION 21

- 186 ﴿Oh ye people !  
 Eat of what is on earth,  
 Lawful and good ,<sup>169</sup>  
 And do not follow  
 The footsteps of the Evil One,  
 For he is to you  
 An avowed enemy

١٦٨- بَايَهُمُ النَّاسُ كُلُّوْا مِمَّا فِى الْاَرْضِ  
 حَلٰلًا طَيِّبًا وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوْا خُطُوٰتِ الشَّيْطٰنِ  
 اِنَّهٗ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِيْنٌ ۝

169 We now come to the regulations about food. First (vv 168 171) we have an appeal to all people Muslims Pagans as well as the People of the Book then (vv 172 3) to the Muslims specially then (vv 174 6) to the sort of men who then (as some do now) either believe in too much formalism or believe in no restrictions at all. Islam follows the Golden Mean. All well regulated societies lay down reasonable limitations. These become incumbent on all loyal members of any given society and show what is 'lawful' in that society. But if the limitations are reasonable as they should be the 'lawful' will also coincide more and more with what is 'good'.

Good *Tayyib*—Pure clean wholesome nourishing pleasing to the taste.  
 The general principle then would be what is lawful and what is good should be followed not what is evil or shameful or foisted on by false ascription to divine injunctions or what rests merely on the usage of ancestors even though the ancestors were ignorant or foolish. An example of a shameful custom would be that among the Pagan Arabs of taking congealed blood and eating it fried.

169 For he commands you  
What is evil  
And shameful,  
And that ye should say  
Of God that of which  
Ye have no knowledge

١٦٩- إِنَّمَا يَأْمُرُكُمْ  
بِالشُّوْءِ وَالْفَحْشَاءِ  
وَأَنْ تَقُولُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ○

170 When it is said to them  
"Follow what God hath  
revealed "  
They say " Nay ' we shall follow  
The ways of our fathers "  
What ' even though their fathers  
Were void of wisdom and  
guidance ?

١٧٠- وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمُ اتَّبِعُوا مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ  
قَالُوا بَلْ نَتَّبِعُ مَا أَلْفَيْنَا عَلَيْهِ آبَاءَنَا  
أَوْ لَوْ كَانَ آبَاؤُهُمْ  
لَا يَعْقِلُونَ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَهْتَدُونَ ○

171 The parable of those  
Who reject Faith is  
As if one were to shout  
Like a goatherd, to things  
That listen to nothing  
But calls and cries <sup>170</sup>  
Deaf, dumb, and blind, <sup>171</sup>  
They are void of wisdom

١٧١- وَمَثَلُ الَّذِينَ  
كَفَرُوا كَمَثَلِ الْيَدِيِّ  
يَنصَحُ بِمَا لَا يَسْمَعُ إِلَّا دُعَاءً وَبِدَاءً  
صُمٌّ بُكْمٌ عُمْى فَهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ ○

172 Oh ye who believe !  
Eat of the good things  
That We have provided for you,  
And be grateful to God,  
If it is Him ye worship <sup>172</sup>

١٧٢- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُلُوا مِنْ طَيِّبِ مَا  
رَزَقْنَاكُمْ وَاشْكُرُوا لِلَّهِ  
إِنْ كُنْتُمْ إِيَّاهُ تَعْبُدُونَ ○

173 He hath only forbidden you  
Carrion, <sup>173</sup> and blood,  
And the flesh of swine,  
And that on which

١٧٣- إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ  
الْمَيْتَةَ وَالْدَّمَ وَلَحْمَ الْخِنْزِيرِ

170 If you reject all faith the highest wisdom and the most salutary regulations are lost on you You are like dumb driven cattle who can merely hear calls but cannot distinguish intelligently between shades of meaning or subtle differences of values

171 Cf II 18 where we are told that the rejectors of faith are deaf dumb and blind they will not return to the path " Here the consequence of their not using their senses is that they have no wisdom In each context there is just the appropriate deduction

172 Gratitude for God's gifts is one form of worship

173 Carrion *maytat* the original Arabic has a slightly wider meaning given to it in *Fiqah* (Religious Law) anything that dies of itself *ie* which is not expressly killed for food with the *Kalima* duly pronounced on it But there are exceptions *e.g.* fish and locusts are lawful though they have not been made specially *halāl* with the *Kalima* But even fish or locusts as carrion would be obviously ruled out.



Any other name hath been invoked  
 Besides that of God <sup>174</sup>  
 But if one is forced by necessity,  
 Without wilful disobedience,  
 Nor transgressing due limits,—  
 Then is he guiltless  
 For God is Oft-forgiving  
 Most Merciful

وَمَا أَهْلَ بِهِ لَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ  
 فَمَنْ اضْطُرَّ غَيْرَ بَاغٍ وَلَا عَادٍ  
 فَلَا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ  
 إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ○

- 174 Those who conceal  
 God's revelations in the Book,  
 And purchase for them  
 A miserable profit,—  
 They swallow into themselves <sup>175</sup>  
 Naught but Fire,  
 God will not address them  
 On the Day of Resurrection,  
 Nor purify them  
 Grievous will be  
 Their Penalty

١٤٣- إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَكْتُمُونَ  
 مَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ  
 وَيَشْتَرُونَ بِهِ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا  
 لُولَئِكَ مَا يَأْكُلُونَ فِي بُطُونِهِمْ إِلَّا النَّارَ  
 وَلَا يَكَلِّمُهُمُ اللَّهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ  
 وَلَا يُزَكِّيهِمْ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ○

- 175 They are the ones  
 Who buy Error  
 In place of Guidance  
 And Torment in place  
 Of Forgiveness  
 Ah ! what boldness  
 (They show) for the Fire !

١٤٥- أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ اشْتَرُوا الضَّلَالَةَ  
 بِالْهُدَى  
 وَالْعَذَابَ بِالْغُفْرَةِ  
 فَمَا أَصْبَرَهُمْ عَلَى النَّارِ ○

- 176 (Their doom is) because  
 God sent down the Book  
 In truth but those who seek  
 Causes of dispute in the Book

١٤٦- ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ نَزَّلَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ  
 وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ احْتَلَفُوا فِي الْكِتَابِ

174 For prohibited foods cf also Q v 45 vi 121 138 146 The teachers of *Iqah* (Religious Law) work out the details with great elaboration. My purpose is to present general principles not technical details. Carrion and blood as articles of food would obviously cause disgust to any refined person. So would swine's flesh where the swine live on offal. Where swine are fed artificially on clean food the objections remain: (1) that they are filthy animals in other respects and the flesh of filthy animals taken as food affects the eater; (2) that swine's flesh has more fat than muscle building material, and (3) that it is more liable to disease than other kinds of meat. *e.g.* trichinosis characterised by hair like worms in the muscular tissue. As to food dedicated to idols or false gods it is obviously unseemly for the Children of Unity to partake of it.

175 They eat nothing but fire into their bellies 'is a literal translation that produces an effect of rude inelegance which is not in the Arabic words. Even in the matter of food and drinks, the mission of Islam is to avoid the extremes of lawlessness on the one hand and extreme formalism on the other. It has laid down a few simple and very reasonable rules. Their infraction causes loss of health or physical powers in any case. But if there is further a spirit of subjective rebellion or fraud—passing off in the name of religion something which is far from the purpose—the consequences become also moral and spiritual. Then it becomes a sin against Faith and Spirit. Continuing the physical simile we actually swallow fire into ourselves. Imagine the torments which we should have if we swallowed fire into our physical body! They would be infinitely worse in our spiritual state, and they would go on to the Day of Resurrection, when we shall be deprived even of the words which the Judge speaks to a reasonable culprit, and we shall certainly not win His Grace and Mercy.

Are in a schism <sup>176</sup>  
Far (from the purpose)

لَيْسَ لِي شِقَاقٌ بَعِيدٌ

## SECTION 22

177 It is not righteousness  
That ye turn your faces  
Towards East or West,  
But it is righteousness—<sup>177</sup>  
To believe in God <sup>178</sup>  
And the Last Day,  
And the Angels,  
And the Book,  
And the Messengers,  
To spend of your substance, <sup>179</sup>  
Out of love for Him,  
For your kin,  
For orphans,  
For the needy,  
For the wayfarer,  
For those who ask,  
And for the ransom of slaves,  
To be steadfast in prayer, <sup>180</sup>  
And practice regular charity,  
To fulfil the contracts  
Which ye have made,

۱۷۷- لَيْسَ الْبِرُّ أَنْ تُولُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ  
قِبَلَ الشَّرْقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ  
وَلَكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ  
وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالْكِتَابِ  
وَالرَّسُولِ  
وَأَتَى الْمَالَ عَلَى حُبِّهِ ذَوِي الْقُرْبَى  
وَالْيَتَامَى وَالْمَسْكِينِ  
وَأَنَسَ السَّبِيلَ وَالسَّائِلِينَ وَفِي الرِّفَاقِ  
وَأَقَامَ الصَّلَاةَ وَأَتَى الزَّكَاةَ  
وَالْمُؤُونُ بِعَهْدِهِمْ إِذَا عَاهَدُوا

176 From the mere physical regulation we are at once lifted up into the sphere of morals and faith For the one acts and reacts on the other If we are constantly carping at wholesome regulations we shall do nothing but cause division and schisms among the people and ordered society would tend to break up

177 As if to emphasise again a warning against deadening formalism we are given a beautiful description of the righteous and God fearing man He should obey salutary regulations but he should fix his gaze on the love of God and the love of his fellow men We are given four heads (1) our faith should be true and sincere (2) we must be prepared to show it in deeds of charity to our fellow men, (3) we must be good citizens supporting social organisation, and (4) our own individual soul must be firm and unshaken in all circumstances They are interconnected and yet can be viewed separately

178 Faith is not merely a matter of words We must realise the presence and goodness of God When we do so the scales fall from our eyes all the falsities and fleeting nature of the Present cease to enslave us for we see the Last Day as if it were today We also see God's working in His world and in us His Powers (angels) His Messengers and His Message are no longer remote from us but come within our experience

179 Practical deeds of charity are of value when they proceed from love and from no other motive In this respect, also our duties take various forms which are shown in reasonable gradation our kith and kin, orphans (including any persons who are without support or help), people who are in real need but who never ask (it is our duty to find them out and they come before those who ask), the stranger, who is entitled to laws of hospitality, the people who ask and are entitled to ask, i.e. not merely lazy beggars but those who seek our assistance in some form or another (it is our duty to respond to them), and the slaves (we must do all we can to give or buy their freedom) Slavery has many insidious forms and all are included

180 Charity and piety in individual cases do not complete our duties In prayer and charity, we must also look to our organised efforts where there is a Muslim State these are made through the State in facilities for public prayer and public assistance, and for the maintenance of contracts and fair dealing in all matters

And to be firm and patient,<sup>181</sup>  
 In pain (or suffering)  
 And adversity,  
 And throughout  
 All periods of panic  
 Such are the people  
 Of truth, the God-fearing

- 178 **Oh** ye who believe!<sup>1</sup>  
 The law of equality<sup>182</sup>  
 Is prescribed to you  
 In cases of murder<sup>183</sup>  
 The free for the free,  
 The slave for the slave,  
 The woman for the woman  
 But if any remission  
 Is made by the brother<sup>184</sup>  
 Of the slain, then grant  
 Any reasonable demand,<sup>185</sup>  
 And compensate him

وَالضَّارِّينَ فِي الْبَاسَاءِ وَالضَّرَآءِ وَحِينَ  
 النَّاسِ  
 أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا  
 وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُتَّقُونَ ○  
 ١٤٨- يَأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا  
 كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِصَاصُ فِي الْقَتْلِ  
 الْحُرُّ بِالْحُرِّ  
 وَالْعَبْدُ بِالْعَبْدِ  
 وَالْأُنْثَىٰ بِالْأُنْثَىٰ  
 فَمَنْ عَفَىٰ لَهُ مِنْ إِخِيهِ شَيْءٌ

181 Then come the Muslim virtues of firmness and patience. They are to preserve the dignity of man with soul erect. (Burns). Three sets of circumstances are specially mentioned for the exercise of this virtue: (1) bodily pain or suffering, (2) adversities or injuries of all kinds deserved and undeserved, and (3) periods of public panic such as war, violence, pestilence, etc.

182 Note first that this verse and the next make it clear that Islam has much mitigated the horrors of the pre-Islamic custom of retaliation. In order to meet the strict claims of justice, equality is prescribed with a strong recommendation for mercy and forgiveness. To translate *qisās* therefore by retaliation is I think incorrect. The Latin legal term *Lex Talionis* may come near it, but even that is modified here. In any case it is best to avoid technical terms for things that are very different.

Retaliation in English has a wider meaning equivalent almost to returning evil for evil, and would more fitly apply to the blood feuds of the Days of Ignorance. Islam says if you *must* take a life for a life, at least there should be some measure of equality in it: the killing of the slave of a tribe should not involve a blood feud where many free men would be killed, but the law of mercy where it can be obtained by consent with reasonable compensation would be better.

Our law of equality only takes account of three conditions in civil society, free for free, slave for slave, woman for woman. Among free men or women all are equal: you cannot ask that because a wealthy or high born or influential man is killed, his life is equal to two or three lives among the poor or the lowly. Nor in cases of murder can you go into the value or abilities of a slave. A woman is mentioned separately because her position as a mother or an economic worker is different. She does not form a third class, but a division in the other two classes. One life having been lost, do not waste many lives in retaliation: at most let the Law take one life under strictly prescribed conditions, and shut the door to private vengeance or tribal retaliation. But if the aggrieved party consents (and this condition of consent is laid down to prevent worse evils), forgiveness and brotherly love is better, and the door of Mercy is kept open. In Western law no felony can be compounded.

183 The jurists have carefully laid down that the law of *qisās* refers to murder only. *Qisās* is not applicable to manslaughter due to a mistake or an accident. There there would be no capital punishment.

184 *The brother*: the term is perfectly general: all men are brothers in Islam. In this and in all questions of inheritance females have similar rights to males, and therefore the masculine gender imports both sexes. Here we are considering the rights of the heirs in the light of the larger brotherhood. In vv 178-9 we have the rights of the heirs to life (as it were); in vv 180-2 we proceed to the heirs to property.

185 The demand should be such as can be met by the party concerned, i.e. within his means and reasonable according to justice and good conscience. For example, a demand could not be made affecting the honour of a woman or a man. The whole penalty can be remitted if the aggrieved party agrees out of brotherly love. In meeting that demand the culprit or his friends should equally be generous and recognise the good will of the other side. There should be no subterfuges, no bribes, no unseemly bye-play: otherwise the whole intention of mercy and peace is lost.

فَالْمَنَاعُ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَأَدَاءُ إِلَيْهِ بِإِحْسَانٍ  
ذَلِكَ مَخْصُوفٌ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ  
فَبِمَا أَعْدَى نَعْدَ ذَلِكَ  
فَلَهُ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ○

- ١٤٩- وَلَكُمْ فِي الْقِصَاصِ حَيَوةٌ  
يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا  
لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ○

- ١٨- كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ إِذَا حَضَرَ أَحَدَكُمُ الْمَوْتُ  
إِنْ تَرَكَ خَيْرًا ۚ الْوَصِيَّةُ لِلْوَالِدَيْنِ  
وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ  
حَقًّا عَلَى الْمُتَّقِينَ ۝

- ١٨١- فَمَنْ يَهْدِيهِ فَعَدَا مَا سَمِعَهُ  
وَأَمَّا آتَمَةٌ عَلَى الَّذِينَ يُنَادُونَهُ  
إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ

- ١٨٢- فَمَنْ حَافٍ مِنْ مَوْرِثٍ جَنَعًا أَوْ إِتْسًا  
فَأَصْلَهُ نَسْلُهُمْ

187 A verbal will is allowed but it is expected that the testator will be just to his heirs and not depart from what is considered equitable. For this reason definite shares were laid down for heirs later (see Q iv 11 etc.) These define or limit the testamentary power but do not abrogate it. For example amongst kin there are persons (e.g. an orphan grandson in the presence of surviving sons) who would not inherit under the intestate scheme and the testator might like to provide for them. Again there may be outsiders for whom he may wish to provide and jurists have held that he has powers of disposition up to one third of his property. But he must not be partial to one heir at the expense of another or attempt to defeat lawful creditors. If he tries to do this those who are witnesses to his oral disposition may interfere in two ways. One way would be to persuade the testator to change his bequest before he dies. The other way would be after death to get the interested parties together and ask them to agree to a more equitable arrangement. In such a case they are acting in good faith and there is no fraud. They are doing nothing wrong. Islam approves of every lawful device for keeping brethren at peace without litigation and quarrels. Except for this, the changing of the provisions of a Will is a crime, as it is under all Law.

(The parties concerned),  
There is no wrong in him,  
For God is Oft-forgiving,  
Most Merciful

فَلَا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ  
إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ٥

## SECTION 23

- 183 ٥h ye who believe !  
Fasting is prescribed to you  
As it was prescribed <sup>188</sup>  
To those before you,  
That ye may (learn)  
Self-restraint,—

۱۸۳-يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ  
كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ  
لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ٥

- 184 (Fasting) for a fixed <sup>189</sup>  
Number of days ,  
But if any of you is ill,  
Or on a journey, <sup>190</sup>  
The prescribed number  
(Should be made up)  
From days later  
For those who can do it <sup>191</sup>  
(With hardship), is a ransom,  
The feeding of one  
That is indigent  
But he that will give  
More, of his own free will,—  
It is better for him  
And if ye fast,  
It is better for you,  
If ye only knew

۱۸۴-أَيَّامًا مَّعْدُودَاتٍ  
فَمَن كَانَ مِنكُم مَّرِيضًا  
أَوْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ  
فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ  
وَعَلَى الَّذِينَ يُطِيقُونَهُ وِدَّةٌ طَعَامُ  
مِسْكِينٍ فَمَن نَّطَوَّعَ حَيْرًا فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَهُ  
وَأَن تَصُومُوا خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ  
إِن كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ٥

188 As it was prescribed this does not mean that the Muslim fast is like the other fasts previously observed in the number of days in the time or manner of the fast or in other incidents it only means that the principle of self denial by fasting is not a new one

189 This verse should be read with the following verses 185 188 in order that the incidents of the physical fast may be fully understood with reference to its spiritual meaning

The Muslim fast is not meant for self torture Although it is stricter than other fasts it also provides alleviations for special circumstances If it were merely a temporary abstinence from food and drink it would be salutary to many people who habitually eat and drink to excess The instincts for food drink and sex are strong in the animal nature and temporary restraint from all these enables the attention to be directed to higher things This is necessary through prayer, contemplation and acts of charity not of the showy kind but by seeking out those really in need Certain standards are prescribed but much higher standards are recommended

190 Illness and journey must not be interpreted in an elastic sense they must be such as to cause real pain or suffering if the fast were observed For journeys a minimum standard of three marches is prescribed by some Commentators others make it more precise by naming a distance of 16 farsakhs equivalent to 48 miles A journey of 8 or 9 miles on foot is more tiring than a similar one by bullock cart There are various degrees of fatigue in riding a given distance on horseback or by camel or in a comfortable tram or by motor car or by steamer aeroplane or air ship In my opinion the standard must depend on the means of locomotion and on the relative resources of the traveller It is better to determine it in each case according to circumstances

191 Those who can do it with hardship such as aged people or persons specially circumstanced The Shāfi'is would include a woman expecting a child or one who is nursing a baby, but on this point opinion is not unanimous, some holding that they ought to put in the fasts later, when they

- 185 Ramadhān is the month  
In which was sent down }  
The Qurān, as a guide 18  
To mankind, also clear (Signs)  
For guidance and judgment 194  
(Between right and wrong)  
So every one of you  
Who is present (at his home)  
During that month  
Should spend it in fasting,  
But if anyone is ill,  
Or on a journey,  
The prescribed period  
(Should be made up)  
By days later  
God intends every facility  
For you, He does not want  
To put you to difficulties  
He wants you to complete  
The prescribed period,  
And to glorify Him 193  
In that He has guided you,  
And perchance ye shall be  
grateful

- 186 When My servants  
Ask thee concerning Me,  
I am indeed  
Close (to them) I listen  
To the prayer of every  
Suppliant when he calleth on Me  
Let them also, with a will,  
Listen to My call,  
And believe in Me  
That they may walk  
In the right way 194

- 187 Permitted to you,  
On the night of the fasts,  
Is the approach to your wives  
They are your garments

١٨٥- شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنْزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ  
هُدًى لِلنَّاسِ  
وَيَذِّنُ مِنَ الْهُدَى وَالْفُرْقَانِ  
فَمَنْ شَهِدَ مِنْكُمُ الشَّهْرَ فَلْيَصُمْهُ  
وَمَنْ كَانَ مَرِيضًا  
أَوْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ  
فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ  
يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ بِكُمُ الْيُسْرَ  
وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ الْعُسْرَ  
وَلِتُكْمِلُوا الْعِدَّةَ  
وَلِتُكَبِّرُوا اللَّهَ عَلَى مَا هَدَاكُمْ  
وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ

١٨٦- وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي  
عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ  
أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ  
إِذَا دَعَانِ  
فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا إِلَيَّ  
وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا بِي لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ

١٨٧- أَجَلَ لَكُمْ لَيْلَةَ الصِّيَامِ الرَّفَثُ إِلَى  
نِسَائِكُمْ هُنَّ لِبَاسٌ لَّكُمْ

192. Judgment (between right and wrong) *Furqān* = the criterion or standard by which we judge between right and wrong See II 53 n

193 The regulations are again and again coupled with an insistence on two things (a) the facilities and concessions given, and (b) the spiritual significance of the fast without which it is like an empty shell without a kernel. If we realise this we shall look upon Ramadhān, not as a burden, but as a blessing and shall be duly grateful for the lead given to us in this matter

194 This verse 186 and v 188 are not foreign to the subject of Ramadhān but emphasize its spiritual aspect. H-re we are told of Prayer and the nearness of God and in v 188 we are asked not to 'eat up' other people's substance





A little of (other) people's  
property <sup>201</sup>

#### SECTION 24

189 They ask thee  
Concerning the New Moons <sup>202</sup>  
Say They are but signs  
To mark fixed periods of time  
In (the affairs of) men,  
And for Pilgrimage  
It is no virtue if ye enter  
Your houses from the back  
It is virtue if ye fear God  
Enter houses  
Through the proper doors <sup>203</sup>  
And fear God  
That ye may prosper

190 Fight in the cause of God  
Those who fight you, <sup>204</sup>  
But do not transgress limits,  
For God loveth not transgressors

191 And slay them  
Wherever ye catch them,  
And turn them out  
From where they have

وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ۝

١٨٩- يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْآهِلَةِ  
قُلْ هِيَ مَوَاقِيتُ لِلنَّاسِ وَالْحَجِّ  
وَلَيْسَ الْبِرُّ بِأَنْ تَأْتُوا الْبُيُوتَ مِنْ  
ظُهُورِهَا  
وَلَكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مِنَ اتَّقَى  
وَأْتُوا الْبُيُوتَ مِنْ أَبْوَابِهَا  
وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ۝

١٩٠- وَقَاتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ الَّذِينَ يُقَاتِلُونَكُمْ  
وَلَا تَعْتَدُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ ۝

١٩١- وَأَقْتُلُواهُمْ حَيْثُ ثَقَفْتُمُوهُمْ  
وَاخْرِجُوهُمْ مِنْ حَيْثُ أَخْرَجُوكُمْ

201 Besides the three primal physical needs of man which are apt to make him greedy there is a fourth greed in society the greed of wealth and property The purpose of fasts is not completed until this fourth greed is also restrained Ordinarily honest men are content if they refrain from robbery theft or embezzlement Two more subtle forms of the greed are mentioned here One is where one uses one's own property for corrupting others—judges or those in authority—so as to obtain some material gain even under the cover and protection of the law The words translated other people's property may also mean public property A still more subtle form is where we use our own property or property under our own control—among yourselves in the text—for vain or frivolous uses Under the Islamic standard this is also greed Property carries with it its own responsibilities If we fail to understand or fulfil them we have not learnt the full lesson of self denial by fasts

202 There were many superstitions connected with the New Moon as there are to the present day We are told to disregard such superstitions As a measure of time where the lunar calendar is used the New Moon is one great sign for which people watch with eagerness Muslim festivals including the Pilgrimage are fixed by the appearance of the New Moon The Arabs among other superstitions had one which made them enter their houses by the back door during or after the Pilgrimage This is disapproved for there is no virtue in any such artificial restrictions All virtue proceeds from the love and fear of God

203 This is a Muslim proverb now and much might be written about its manifold meanings A few may be noted here (1) If you enter a society respect its manners and customs (2) If you want to achieve an object honourably go about it openly and not by a backdoor (3) Do not beat about the bush (4) If you wish success in an undertaking provide all the necessary instruments for it

The subject of the New Moon provides a good transition between the Ramaḍhān fast, which begins and ends with the New Moon the Pilgrimage whose ten days commence with the New Moon and the Wars which Islam had to wage in self defence against the Pagans who wanted to exclude them from the Pilgrimage after they had driven them out of house and home

204 War is only permissible in self defence, and under well defined limits When undertaken it must be pushed with vigour but not relentlessly but only to restore peace and freedom for the worship of God In any case strict limits must not be transgressed women children, old and infirm men should not be molested, nor trees and crops cut down nor peace withheld when the enemy comes to terms



Turned you out,  
For tumult and oppression  
Are worse than slaughter,  
But fight them not<sup>205</sup>  
At the Sacred Mosque,  
Unless they (first)  
Fight you there,  
But if they fight you,  
Slay them  
Such is the reward  
Of those who suppress faith<sup>206</sup>

وَالْفِتْنَةُ أَشَدُّ مِنَ الْقَتْلِ  
وَلَا تُقَاتِلُوهُمْ عِنْدَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ  
حَتَّى يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ فِيهِ  
فَإِنْ قَاتَلُوكُمْ فَاقْتُلُوهُمْ  
كَذَلِكَ جَزَاءُ الْكَافِرِينَ ○

192 But if they cease,  
God is Oft-forgiving,  
Most Merciful

۱۹۲- فَإِنْ انْتَهَوْا

فَرَأَى اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا ○

193 And fight them on  
Until there is no more  
Tumult or oppression,  
And there prevail  
Justice and faith in God,<sup>207</sup>  
But if they cease,<sup>208</sup>  
Let there be no hostility  
Except to those  
Who practise oppression

۱۹۳- وَقَاتِلُوهُمْ حَتَّى لَا تَكُونَ فِتْنَةٌ  
وَيَكُونَ الدِّينُ لِلَّهِ  
فَإِنْ انْتَهَوْا فَلَا عُدْوَانَ إِلَّا عَلَى  
الظَّالِمِينَ ○

205 This passage is illustrated by the events that happened at Hudaibiya in the sixth year of the Hijra though it is not clear that it was revealed on that occasion. The Muslims were by this time a strong and influential community. Many of them were exiles from Mecca where the Pagans had established an intolerant autocracy persecuting Muslims preventing them from visiting their homes and even keeping them out by force from performing the Pilgrimage during the universally recognised period of truce. This was intolerance oppression and autocracy to the last degree and the mere readiness of the Muslims to enforce their rights as Arab citizens resulted without bloodshed in an agreement which the Muslims faithfully observed. The Pagans however had no scruples in breaking faith and it is unnecessary here to go into subsequent events.

In general it may be said that Islam is the religion of peace goodwill mutual understanding and good faith. But it will not acquiesce in wrong doing and its men will hold their lives cheap in defence of honour justice and the religion which they hold sacred. Their ideal is that of heroic virtue combined with unselfish gentleness and tenderness such as is exemplified in the life of the Apostle. They believe in courage obedience discipline duty and a constant striving by all the means in their power physical moral intellectual and spiritual for the establishment of truth and righteousness. They know that war is an evil but they will not flinch from it if their honour demands it and (a most important condition) a righteous *Imām* (such as Muhammad was *par excellence*) commands it for then they know they are not serving carnal ends. In other cases war has nothing to do with their faith except that it will always be regulated by its humane precepts.

206 *Suppress faith* in the narrower as well as the larger sense. If they want forcibly to prevent you from exercising your sacred rites they have declared war on your religion, and it would be cowardice to ignore the challenge or to fail in rooting out the tyranny.

207 *Justice and faith*. The Arabic word is *Dīn* which is comprehensive. It implies the ideas of indebtedness duty obedience judgment, justice, faith religion customary rites etc. The clause means 'until there is *Dīn* for God'.

208 If the opposite party cease to persecute you, your hostility ends with them as a party but it does not mean that you become friends to oppression. Your fight is against wrong, there should be no rancour against men.

- 194 **The prohibited month** <sup>209</sup>  
 For the prohibited month, —  
 And so for all things prohibited, —  
 There is the law of equality  
 If then any one transgresses  
 The prohibition against you,  
 Transgress ye likewise  
 Against him  
 But fear God, and know <sup>210</sup>  
 That God is with those  
 Who restrain themselves

١٩٤- الشَّهْرُ الْحَرَامُ بِالشَّهْرِ الْحَرَامِ  
 وَالْحُرُمَتِ قِصَاصٌ  
 لِّمَنِ اعْتَدَى عَلَيْكُمْ  
 فَاعْتَدُوا عَلَيْهِ بِمِثْلِ مَا اعْتَدَى  
 عَلَيْكُمْ

- 195 And spend of your substance  
 In the cause of God,  
 And make not your own hands  
 Contribute to your destruction, <sup>211</sup>  
 But do good,  
 For God loveth those  
 Who do good

وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الْمُتَّقِينَ ○  
 ١٩٥- وَأَنْفِقُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلَا تُلْقُوا  
 بِأَيْدِيكُمْ إِلَى التَّهْلُكَةِ  
 وَأَحْسِنُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ○

- 196 **And complete**  
 The *Hajj* or '*umra* <sup>212</sup>

١٩٦- وَأَتِمُّوا الْحَجَّ وَالْعُمْرَةَ لِلَّهِ

209 *Harām* = prohibited sacred The month of Pilgrimage (*Zul hajj*) was a sacred month in which warfare was prohibited by Arab custom The month preceding (*Zul qa d*) and the month following (*Muharram*) were included in the prohibition and *Muharram* was specially called *al Harām* Possibly *Muharram* is meant in the first line and the other months and other prohibited things in all things prohibited In Rajab also war was prohibited If the pagan enemies of Islam broke that custom and made war in the prohibited months the Muslims were free also to break that custom but only to the same extent as the others broke it Similarly the territory of Mecca was sacred in which war was prohibited If the enemies of Islam broke that custom the Muslims were free to do so to that extent Any convention is useless if one party does not respect it There must be a law of equality Or perhaps the word reciprocity may express it better

210 At the same time the Muslims are commanded to exercise self restraint as much as possible Force is a dangerous weapon It may have to be used for self defence or self preservation but we must always remember that self restraint is pleasing in the eyes of God Even when we are fighting it should be for a principle not out of passion

211 Every fight requires the wherewithals for the fight the sinews of war If the war is just and in the cause of God all who have wealth must spend it freely That may be their contribution to the Cause in addition to their personal effort or if for any reason they are unable to fight If they hug their wealth perhaps their own hands are helping in their own self destruction Or if their wealth is being spent not in the Cause of God but in something which pleases their fancy it may be that the advantage goes to the enemy and they are by their action helping their own destruction In all things their standard should be not selfishness but the good of their brethren for such good is pleasing to God

212 See n 158 n The *Hajj* is the complete pilgrimage of which the chief rites are during the first ten days of the month of *Zul hajj* The *umra* is a less formal pilgrimage at any time of the year In either case the intending pilgrim commences by putting on a simple garment of unsewn cloth in two pieces when he is some distance yet from Mecca The putting on of the pilgrim garb (*ihram*) is symbolical of his renouncing the vanities of the world After this and until the end of the pilgrimage he must not wear other clothes or ornaments anoint his hair use perfumes hunt or do other prohibited acts The completion of the pilgrimage is symbolised by the shaving of the head for men, and the cutting off of a few locks of the hair of the head for women the putting off of the *ihram* and the resumption of the ordinary dress

Here we are told (1) that having once undertaken the pilgrimage we must complete it, (2) that we must do it not for worldly ends but as a symbol of our service and worship to God (3) that if we are prevented for any reason from completing the rites a symbolical completion can be made by sending an offering for sacrifice, sacrifice would have been offered if we had been present personally here we would send the sacrifice vicariously, and when it is likely to reach the place of sacrifice, we could then shave our heads and resume our ordinary dress and avocations

In the service of God  
But if ye are prevented  
(From completing it),  
Send an offering  
For sacrifice,  
Such as ye may find,  
And do not shave your heads  
Until the offering reaches  
The place of sacrifice  
And if any of you is ill,<sup>213</sup>  
Or has an ailment in his scalp,  
(Necessitating shaving),  
(He should) in compensation  
Either fast, or feed the poor,  
Or offer sacrifice,  
And when ye are  
In peaceful conditions (again),<sup>214</sup>  
If any one wishes  
To continue the 'umra  
On to the *hajj*,  
He must make an offering,  
Such as he can afford,  
But if he cannot afford it,  
He should fast  
Three days during the *hajj*  
And seven days on his return,  
Making ten days in all  
This is for those  
Whose household  
Is not in (the precincts<sup>215</sup>  
Of) the Sacred Mosque  
And fear God,  
And know that God  
Is strict in punishment<sup>216</sup>

فَإِنْ أَحْصَيْتُمْ فَمَا اسْتَيْسَرَ مِنَ الْهَدْيِ  
وَلَا تَحْلِقُوا رُءُوسَكُمْ  
حَتَّى يَبْلُغَ الْهَدْيُ مَحَلَّهُ  
فَمَنْ كَانَ مِنْكُمْ مَرِيضًا  
أَوْ بِإِذَى مِنْ رَأْسِهِ فَفِدْيَةٌ مِنْ صِيَامٍ  
أَوْ صَدَقَةٍ أَوْ نُسُكٍ  
وَإِذَا أَمِنْتُمْ  
فَمَنْ تَكُنَّ بِالْعُدَّةِ إِلَى الْحَجِّ  
فَمَا اسْتَيْسَرَ مِنَ الْهَدْيِ  
فَمَنْ لَمْ يَجِدْ فَوْصِيَامًا ثَلَاثَةَ أَيَّامٍ فِي الْحَجِّ  
وَسَبْعَةً إِذَا رَجَعْتُمْ  
تِلْكَ عَشْرَةٌ كَامِلَةٌ  
ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ أَهْلَهُ حَاضِرِي السَّعْيِ  
الْحَرَامِ  
وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ  
وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ

213 If any one is taken ill after putting on the *Ihram* so that he has to put on other clothes or if he has trouble or skin disease in his head or insects in his hair and he has to shave his head before completion he should fast (three days say the Commentators) or feed the poor, or offer sacrifice

214 When this was revealed the city of Mecca was in the hands of the enemies of Islam and the regulations about the fighting and the pilgrimage came together and were inter connected. But the revelation provides as always for the particular occasion and also for normal conditions. Mecca soon passed out of the hands of the enemies of Islam. People sometimes came long distances to Mecca before the Pilgrimage season began. Having performed the *umra* they stayed on for the formal *Hajj*. In case the pilgrim had spent his money he is shown what he can do: rich or poor and yet hold his head high among his fellows as having performed all rites as prescribed.

215 For residents in Mecca the question does not arise. They are there every day, and there is no question of *'umra* for them.

216 This closes the section about the duties of fighting and introduces the connected question of pilgrimage in a sort of transition. Fighting is connected with fear, and while it is meritorious to obey God, we are warned that we must not allow our selfish passions to carry us away because it is in such times of stress that our spirit is tested. Verse 195 ended with a benediction for those who do good. This verse ends with a warning to those who take advantage of God's cause to transgress the limits, for the punishment is equally sure. The next verse shows us the pitfalls we must avoid in a large concourse of people.

## SECTION 25

197 For Hajj

Are the months well known <sup>217</sup>  
 If any one undertakes  
 That duty therein,  
 Let there be no obscenity,  
 Nor wickedness,  
 Nor wrangling  
 In the Hajj  
 And whatever good  
 Ye do, (be sure)  
 God knoweth it  
 And take a provision <sup>218</sup>  
 (With you) for the journey,  
 But the best of provisions  
 Is right conduct  
 So fear Me,  
 Oh ye that are wise

198 It is no crime in you  
 If ye seek of the bounty  
 Of your Lord (during  
 pilgrimage) <sup>219</sup>  
 Then when ye pour down  
 From (Mount) 'Arafat,  
 Celebrate the praises of God  
 At the Sacred Monument, <sup>220</sup>

١٩٧- الْحَجُّ أَشْهُرٌ مَعْلُومَةٌ

فَمَنْ قَرَضَ فِيْهِنَّ الْحَجَّ فَلَا رَفَثَ  
 وَلَا فُسُوقَ

وَلَا جِدَالَ فِي الْحَجِّ

وَمَا تَفْعَلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ يَعْلَمْهُ اللَّهُ

وَتَزَوَّدُوا فَإِنَّ خَيْرَ الزَّادِ التَّقْوَى

وَالْقَوْلُ يَأْتِي الْأَلْبَابَ ○

١٩٨- لَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ

أَنْ تَبْتَغُوا فَضْلًا مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ

فَإِذَا أَقَضْتُمْ مِنْ عَرَمَاتِ

فَادْكُرُوا اللَّهَ عِنْدَ الْمَشْعَرِ الْحَرَامِ

217 The months well known the months of Shawwal Zul qad and Zul hajj (up to the 10th or the 13th) are set apart for the rites of Hajj That is to say the first rites may begin as early as the beginning of Shawwal with a definite approach to Mecca but the chief rites are concentrated on the first ten days of Zul hajj and specially on the 8th 9th and 10th of that month when the concourse of pilgrims reaches its height The chief rites may be briefly enumerated (1) The wearing of the pilgrim garment (*ihram*) from certain points definitely fixed on all the roads to Mecca, after this the pilgrimage prohibitions come into operation and the pilgrim is dedicated to worship and prayer and the denial of vanities (2) the going round the Kaba seven times (*tawaf*) typifying activity with the kissing of the little Black Stone built into the wall the symbol of concentration in the love of God (3) after a short prayer at the Station of Abraham (Q II 125) the pilgrim goes to the hills Safa and Marwa (Q II 158) the symbols of patience and perseverance, (4) the great Sermon (*Khutba*) on the 7th of Zul hajj when the whole assembly listens to an exposition of the meaning of Hajj (5) the visit on the eighth of the whole body of pilgrims to the Valley of Minā (about six miles north of Mecca) where the pilgrims halt and stay the night proceeding on the ninth to the plain and hill of Arafat about five miles further north which commemorates the reunion of Adam and Eve after their wanderings and is also called the Mount of Mercy (6) the tenth day the Id Day the day of Sacrifice when the sacrifice is offered in the Valley of Minā and the symbolic ceremony of casting seven stones at the Evil One is performed on the first occasion it is continued on subsequent days, both rites are connected with the story of Abraham this is the Id ul Adhha note that the ceremony is symbolically connected with the rejection of evil in thought word and deed This closes the Pilgrimage but a stay of two or three days after this is recommended and this is called *ashraq*

218 It is recommended that pilgrims should come with provisions so that they should not be compelled to resort to begging But as usual our thought is directed at once from the physical to the spiritual If provisions are required for a journey on earth how much more important to provide for the final journey into the future world? The best of such provisions is right conduct which is the same as the fear of God

219 Legitimate trade is allowed in the interests both of the honest trader who can thus meet his own expenses and of the generality of pilgrims who would otherwise be greatly inconvenienced for the necessities of life But the profit must be sought as from the bounty of God There should be no profiteering or trade tricks Good honest trade is a form of service to the community and therefore to God

220 About midway between Arafat and Minā (see note to II 197) is a place called Muzdalifa where the Holy Apostle offered up a long prayer It has thus become a Sacred Monument and pilgrims are directed to follow that example on their return A special reason for this is given in the note following

And celebrate His praises  
As He has directed you,  
Even though, before this,  
Ye went astray <sup>221</sup>

- 199 Then pass on  
At a quick pace from the place  
Whence it is usual  
For the multitude <sup>222</sup>  
So to do, and ask  
For God's forgiveness  
For God is Oft-forgiving,  
Most Merciful

- 200 So when ye have  
Accomplished your holy rites,  
Celebrate the praises of God,  
As ye used to celebrate  
The praises of your fathers, — <sup>223</sup>  
Yea, with far more  
Heart and soul  
There are men who say  
"Our Lord! Give us  
(Thy bounties) in this world!"  
But they will have  
No portion in the Hereafter <sup>224</sup>

- 201 And there are men who say  
"Our Lord! Give us  
Good in this world  
And good in the Hereafter,  
And defend us  
From the torment  
Of the Fire!"

وَالذِّكْرُوهُ كَمَا هَدَانَا  
وَلِنْ كُنْتُمْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ لَمَنِ الضَّالِّينَ ○

١٩٩- ثُمَّ أَفِيضُوا مِنْ حَيْثُ أَفَاضَ

النَّاسِ

وَاسْتَغْفِرُوا اللَّهَ

إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ○

٢٠- فَإِذَا قَضَيْتُمْ مَنَاسِكَكُمْ

فَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ

كَمَا ذَكَرْتُمْ آبَاءَكُمْ أَوْ أَشَدَّ ذِكْرًا

فَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَقُولُ رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي

الدُّنْيَا

وَمَا لَهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنْ خَلَقٍ ○

٢٠١- وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ يَقُولُ رَبَّنَا آتِنَا

فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً

وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ ○

221 Certain arrogant tribes living in Mecca used not to go to 'Arafat with the crowd but to stop short at Muzdalifa. They are rebuked for their arrogance and told that they must perform all the rites like the rest of the pilgrims. There is equality in Islam.

222 See the last note. Towards the end of the Pilgrimage the crowd is very great and if any people loitered after 'Arafat it would cause great confusion and inconvenience. The pace has therefore to be quick for every one a very salutary regulation. Every member of the crowd must think of the comfort and convenience of the whole mass.

223 After the Pilgrimage in Pagan times the pilgrims used to gather in assemblies in which the praises of ancestors were sung. As the whole of the pilgrimage rites were spiritualised in Islam so this aftermath of the Pilgrimage was also spiritualised. It was recommended for pilgrims to stay on two or three days after the pilgrimage but they must use them in prayer and praise to God. See v 203 below.

224 If you hasten to get all the good things of the world and only think of them and pray for them you would lose the higher things of the future. The proper Muslim attitude is neither to renounce this world nor to be so engrossed in it as to forget the spiritual future.

- 202 To these will be allotted <sup>225</sup>  
What they have earned,  
And God is quick in account

- 203 Celebrate the praises of God  
During the Appointed Days <sup>226</sup>  
But if any one hastens  
To leave in two days,  
There is no blame on him,  
And if any one stays on,  
There is no blame on him,  
If his aim is to do right  
Then fear God, and know  
That ye will surely  
Be gathered unto Him

204. There is the type of man <sup>227</sup>  
Whose speech  
About this world's life  
May dazzle thee,  
And he calls God to witness  
About what is in his heart,  
Yet is he the most contentious  
Of enemies.

- 205 When he turns his back,  
His aim everywhere  
Is to spread mischief  
Through the earth and destroy  
Crops and cattle  
But God loveth not mischief

- 206 When it is said to him  
"Fear God,"  
He is led by arrogance  
To (more) crime

٢٠٢ - أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ ثَمَرُهُمْ وَمَتَّاعُونَ

وَاللَّهُ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ

٢٠٣ - وَادْكُرُوا اللَّهَ فِي أَيَّامٍ مَّعْدُودَاتٍ

فَمَنْ تَعَجَّلَ فِي يَوْمَيْنِ

فَلَا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ

وَمَنْ تَأَخَّرَ فَلَا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ لِمَنِ اتَّقَىٰ

وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ

وَأَجْلِسُوا إِلَى الْكُفَّارِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَخْشَرُونَ

٢٠٤ - وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يُجْبِكُ

قَوْلَهُ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا

وَيَشْهَدُ بِاللَّهِ عَلَىٰ مَا فِي قَلْبِهِ

وَهُوَ أَلَدُّ الْخِصَامِ

٢٠٥ - وَإِذَا تَوَلَّى سَعَىٰ فِي الْأَرْضِ

لِيُفْسِدَ فِيهَا وَيُهْلِكَ الْحَرْثَ وَالنَّسْلَ

وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْفُسَادَ

٢٠٦ - وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُ اتَّقِ اللَّهَ

أَخَذَتْهُ الْعِزَّةُ بِالْإِثْمِ

225 Our spiritual account is mounting up both on the debit and credit side. In worldly accounts both our profits and our losses may be delayed. But in God's books there is no delay. Our actions go before us. (See n 95 n)

226 The Appointed Days the three days after the tenth when the Pilgrims stay on in the Valley of Minā for prayer and praise. They are the days of Tashrīq (see n 200 n). It is optional for pilgrims to leave on the second or third day.

227 The two contrasted types of men mentioned in vv 200 and 201 are here further particularised: the glib hypocrite who appears worldly wise but plans harm, contrasted with the sincere believer who is prepared to suffer martyrdom for his faith. The Commentators give names of people who exemplified these types. The mischief maker has a smooth tongue and indulges in plausible talk with many oaths. He appears to be worldly wise and though you may despise him for his worldliness you may not realise his frauds. Behind your back he is an implacable enemy. He stirs up quarrels and causes all sorts of mischief to you or your friends. He can never win God's love, and we are warned against his tricks.

Enough for him is Hell;—  
What a bed of misery! <sup>228</sup>

- 207 And there is the type of man  
Who gives his life  
To earn the pleasure of God,  
And God is full of kindness  
To (His) devotees <sup>229</sup>

- 208 Oh ye who believe!  
Enter into Islam  
Whole-heartedly,  
And follow not  
The footsteps  
Of the Evil One,  
For he is to you  
An avowed enemy

209. If ye backslide  
After the clear (Signs)  
Have come to you,  
Then know that God  
Is Exalted, Wise <sup>230</sup>

- 210 Will they wait  
Until God comes to them  
In canopies of clouds,  
With angels (in His train)  
And the question  
Is (thus) settled?  
But to God  
Do all questions  
Go back (for decision) <sup>231</sup>

#### SECTION 26

- 211 Ask the Children of Israel <sup>232</sup>  
How many Clear (Signs)

فَحَسْبُهُ جَهَنَّمُ وَلَيْسَ الْبِهَادُ ○

٢٠٧- وَمِنْ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَشْرِي نَفْسَهُ  
ابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِ اللَّهِ  
وَاللَّهُ رَءُوفٌ بِالْعِبَادِ ○  
٢٠٨- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا  
ادْخُلُوا فِي السِّلْمِ كَآفَّةً  
وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا خُطُوَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ  
إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُبِينٌ ○

٢٠٩- فَإِنْ زَلَلْتُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَتْكُمْ  
الْبَيِّنَاتُ  
فَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ○  
٢١٠- قُلْ يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَيَّ أَنْ يَأْتِيَهُمُ اللَّهُ  
فِيهِ ظُلُمٌ مِنَ الْعَمَامِ  
وَالْمَلَكُوتِ وَقُضِيَ الْأَمْرُ  
فَإِلَى اللَّهِ تُرْجَعُ الْأُمُورُ ○

٢١١- سَلْ بَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ كَمْ آتَيْنَاهُمْ مِنْ

<sup>228</sup> According to the English saying 'As you have made your bed, so you must lie in it'

<sup>229</sup> This second type of man—firm sincere devoted willing to give his life for the faith that is in him—was common in early Islam. Such men were its pillars. Through persecution obloquy torture, threat to their own lives or the lives of those dear to them, they stood by their leader, and many of them gave their lives. That is what established Islam. We are asked in the next verse to follow this type and shun the other or evil type. If we do that, our Cause is safe.

<sup>230</sup> If you backslide after the conviction has been brought home to you, you may cause some inconvenience to the Cause, or to those who counted upon you, but do not be so arrogant as to suppose that you will defeat God's Power and Wisdom. The loss will be your own.

<sup>231</sup> If faith is wanting, all sorts of excuses are made to resist the appeal of God. They might and do say 'Oh yes! we shall believe if God appears to us with His angels in His glory!' In other words they want to settle the question in their way and not in God's way. That will not do. The decision in all questions belongs to God. If we are true to Him, we wait for His times and seasons, and do not expect Him to wait on ours.

<sup>232</sup> The Israelites under Moses were shown God's glory and many clear Signs and yet they went after their own ways and preferred their own whims and fancies. So do people in all ages. But let them not deceive themselves. God's justice is sure, and when it comes, it will be strict and unmistakable to those who reject His grace.



We have sent them.  
But if any one,  
After God's favour  
Has come to him,  
Substitutes (something else),  
God is strict in punishment <sup>233</sup>

- 212 The life of this world  
Is alluring to those  
Who reject faith,  
And they scoff at those  
Who believe  
But the righteous  
Will be above them  
On the Day of Resurrection,  
For God bestows His abundance  
Without measure  
On whom He will <sup>234</sup>

- 213 Mankind was one single nation,  
And God sent Messengers  
With glad tidings and warnings,  
And with them He sent  
The Book in truth,  
To judge between people  
In matters wherein  
They differed,  
But the People of the Book,  
After the clear Signs  
Came to them, did not differ  
Among themselves,  
Except through selfish contumacy  
God by His Grace  
Guided the Believers  
To the Truth,  
Concerning that  
Wherein they differed  
For God guides  
Whom He will  
To a path  
That is straight

- 214 Or do ye think  
That ye shall enter

أَيُّكُمْ بِبَيِّنَةٍ وَمَنْ يُبَدِّلْ نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ  
مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَتْهُ  
فَأَنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ○

٢١٢- زُيِّنَ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا  
وَيَسْخَرُونَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا  
وَالَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا فَوْقَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ  
وَاللَّهُ يَرْزُقُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ  
بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ○

٢١٣- كَانَ النَّاسُ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً  
فَبَعَثَ اللَّهُ النَّبِيِّينَ مُبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنْذِرِينَ  
وَأَنْزَلَ مَعَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ  
لِيُحْكُمَ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ  
فِيمَا اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ وَمَا اخْتَلَفَ فِيهِ  
إِلَّا الَّذِينَ أُوتُوهُ مِنْ بَعْدِ  
مَا جَاءَتْهُمْ الْبَيِّنَاتُ بَغْيًا بَيْنَهُمْ  
فَهَدَى اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا  
لِمَا اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ  
مِنَ الْحَقِّ بِإِذْنِهِ وَاللَّهُ يَهْدِي مَنْ  
يَشَاءُ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ ○

٢١٤- أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَنْ تُدْخَلُوا الْجَنَّةَ

<sup>233</sup> Cf II 196 (end) where the question was of those who do not fear God Here the question is of those who reject God's Signs

<sup>234</sup> God's gifts in this world seem unequal, and sometimes those get them who seem to deserve them least. God's bounty is unlimited to the just as well as the unjust. In His wisdom He may give to whomsoever He pleases. The account is not taken now, but will be taken in the end, when the balance will be redressed.



The Garden (of Bliss)  
 Without such (trials)  
 As came to those  
 Who passed away  
 Before you?  
 They encountered  
 Suffering and adversity,  
 And were so shaken in spirit  
 That even the Apostle  
 And those of faith  
 Who were with him  
 Cried "When (will come)  
 The help of God?"  
 Ah! Verily, the help of God  
 Is (always) near!

وَاللَّيَالِي تَكُ مِثْلَ النَّهَارِ  
 فَيُقَالُ لَكَ  
 مَسَّيْنَاهُمُ الْهَاسَاءَ وَالضَّرَاءَ وَزُلْزَلُوا  
 حَتَّى يَقُولَ الرَّسُولُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا  
 مَعَهُ  
 مَتَى نَصُرُ اللَّهَ؟  
 أَلَا إِنَّ نَصْرَ اللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ ۝

215 They ask thee  
 What they should spend  
 (In charity) Say "Whatever  
 Ye spend that is good,<sup>235</sup>  
 Is for parents and kindred  
 And orphans  
 And those in want  
 And for wayfarers  
 And whatever ye do  
 That is good,—God  
 Knoweth it well.

۲۱۵- يَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا يُنْفِقُونَ  
 قُلْ مَا أَنْفَقْتُمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ  
 فَلِلْوَالِدَيْنِ وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ  
 وَالْيَتَامَى وَالسَّكِينِ وَإِنَّ السَّبِيلِ  
 وَمَا تَعْلَمُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ  
 فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِهِ عَلِيمٌ ۝

216 Fighting is prescribed  
 For you, and ye dislike it<sup>236</sup>  
 But it is possible  
 That ye dislike a thing  
 Which is good for you,  
 And that ye love a thing  
 Which is bad for you  
 But God knoweth,  
 And ye know not

۲۱۶- كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِتَالُ وَهُوَ كُرْهُ لَكُمْ  
 وَعَلَيْ أَنْ تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ  
 وَعَلَيْ أَنْ تُحِبُّوا شَيْئًا  
 وَهُوَ شَرٌّ لَكُمْ  
 وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ۝

235 Three questions arise in charity (1) What shall we give? (2) to whom shall we give? and (3) how shall we give? The answer is here Give anything that is good useful helpful, valuable It may be property or money, it may be a helping hand it may be advice it may be a kind word whatever ye do that is good is charity On the other hand, if you throw away what is useless there is no charity in it Or if you give something with a harmful intent eg a sword to a mad man or a drug or sweets or even money to some one whom you want to entrap or corrupt, it is no charity but a gift of damnation to whom should you give? It may be tempting to earn the world's praise by a gift that will be talked about but are you meeting the needs of those who have the first claim on you? If you are not you are like a person who defrauds creditors it is no charity Every gift is judged by its unselfish character the degree of need or claim is a factor which you should consider if you disregard it there is something selfish behind it How should it be given? As in the sight of God, this shuts out all pretence show and insincerity

236 To fight in the cause of Truth is one of the highest forms of charity What can you offer that is more precious than your own life? But here again the limitations come in If you are a mere drawler, or a selfish aggressive person, or a vainglorious bully, you deserve the highest censure If you offer your life to the righteous Imam, who is only guided by God, you are an unselfish hero God knows the value of things better than you do.

## SECTION 27

- 217 They ask thee  
Concerning fighting  
In the Prohibited Month <sup>237</sup>  
Say, "Fighting therein  
Is a grave (offence),  
But graver is it  
In the sight of God  
To prevent access  
To the path of God,  
To deny Him,  
To prevent access  
To the Sacred Mosque,  
And drive out its members" <sup>238</sup>  
Tumult and oppression <sup>239</sup>  
Are worse than slaughter  
Nor will they cease  
Fighting you until  
They turn you back  
From your faith  
If they can  
And if any of you  
Turn back from their faith  
And die in unbelief,  
Their works will bear no fruit  
In this life  
And in the Hereafter,  
They will be  
Companions of the Fire  
And will abide therein
- 218 Those who believed  
And those who suffered exile  
And fought (and strove and  
struggled)  
In the path of God,—  
They have the hope  
Of the Mercy of God,  
And God is Oft-forgiving,  
Most Merciful.

٢١٧- يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الشَّهْرِ الْحَرَامِ وَبِتَالٍ فِيهِ  
قُلْ قِتَالٌ فِيهِ كَبِيرٌ  
وَصَدٌّ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَكُفْرٌ بِهِ  
وَالْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ  
وَإِخْرَاجُ أَهْلِهِ مِنْهُ أَكْبَرُ عِندَ اللَّهِ  
وَالْفِتْنَةُ أَكْبَرُ مِنَ الْقَتْلِ  
وَلَا يَزَالُونَ يَقَاتِلُونَكُمْ حَتَّى تَرُدُّوهُمْ  
عَن دِينِهِمْ إِنِ اسْتَطَاعُوا  
وَمَنْ يَرْتَدِدْ مِنْكُمْ  
عَن دِينِهِ قِيمَتُ  
وَهُوَ كَافِرٌ  
فَأُولَئِكَ حَبِطَتْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ  
فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ  
وَأُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ  
هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ○  
٢١٨- إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا  
وَجَاهَدُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ  
أُولَئِكَ يَرْجُونَ رَحْمَةَ اللَّهِ  
وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ○

237 Prohibited Month See II 194 n

238 The intolerance and persecution of the Pagan clique at Mecca caused untold hardships to the holy Messenger of Islam and his early disciples. They bore all with meekness and long suffering patience until the holy one permitted them to take up arms in self defence. Then they were twitted with breach of the custom about Prohibited Months, though they were driven to fight during that period against their own feeling in self defence. But their enemies not only forced them to engage in actual warfare, but interfered with their conscience, persecuted them and their families openly, insulted and denied God, kept out the Muslim Arabs from the Sacred Mosque and exiled them. Such violence and intolerance are deservedly called worse than slaughter.

239 Cf II 191, 193 where a similar phrase occurs. *Fisna*=trial, temptation as in II 102, or tumult, sedition, oppression as here; M M A H G S, and M P translate 'persecution in this passage, which is also legitimate, seeing that persecution is the suppression of some opinion by violence, force, or threats.

219 They ask thee  
Concerning wine <sup>240</sup> and  
gambling <sup>241</sup>

Say "In them is great sin,  
And some profit, for men,  
But the sin is greater  
Than the profit"

They ask thee how much  
They are to spend,  
Say, "What is beyond <sup>242</sup>  
Your needs"

Thus doth God  
Make clear to you  
His Signs in order that  
Ye may consider—

220 (Its bearings) on  
This life and the Hereafter <sup>243</sup>

They ask thee  
Concerning orphans <sup>244</sup>  
Say "The best thing to do  
Is what is for their good,  
If ye mix  
Their affairs with yours,  
They are your brethren,  
But God knows

٢١٩- يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ  
قُلْ فِيهِمَا إِثْمٌ كَبِيرٌ  
وَمَنَافِعُ لِلنَّاسِ  
وَلِأَكْثَرِ النَّاسِ  
يَضِلُّونَ  
وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا يُنْفِقُونَ  
قُلِ الْعَفْوَ كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمُ الْآيَاتِ  
لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَفَكَّرُونَ  
٢٢٠- فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ

وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْيَتَامَى  
قُلْ إِصْلَاحٌ لَهُمْ خَيْرٌ  
وَأَنْ تُخَالِطُوهُمْ فَارْحَمُوا  
وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ

240 *Wine Khamr* literally understood to mean the fermented juice of the grape, applied by analogy to all fermented liquor and by further analogy to any intoxicating liquor or drug. There may possibly be some benefit in it but the harm is greater than the benefit especially if we look at it from a social as well as an individual point of view

241 *Gambling maisir* literally a means of getting something too easily getting a profit without working for it, hence gambling. That is the principle on which gambling is prohibited. The form most familiar to the Arabs was gambling by casting lots by means of arrows on the principle of a lottery the arrows were marked and served the same purpose as a modern lottery ticket. Something e.g. the carcase of a slaughtered animal was divided into unequal parts. The marked arrows were drawn from a bag. Some were blank and those who drew them got nothing. Others indicated prizes which were big or small. Whether you got a big share or a small share or nothing depended on pure luck unless there was fraud also on the part of some persons concerned. The principle on which the objection is based is that even if there is no fraud you gain what you have not earned or lose on a mere chance. Dice and wagering are rightly held to be within the definition of gambling. But insurance is not gambling, when conducted on business principles. Here the basis for calculation is statistics on a large scale from which mere chance is eliminated. The insurers themselves pay premia in proportion to risks exactly and statistically calculated.

242 Hoarding is no use either to ourselves or to any one else. We should use the wealth we need, any superfluities we must spend in good works or in charity.

243 Gambling and intemperance are social as well as individual sins. They may ruin us in our ordinary every-day worldly life as well as our spiritual future. In case it is suggested that there is no harm in a little indulgence we are asked to think over all its aspects social and individual—worldly and spiritual.

244 For orphans the best rule is to keep their property, household, and accounts separate, lest there should be any temptation to get a personal advantage to their guardian by mixing them with the guardian's property household or accounts,—also to keep clear of any ideas of marriage where this fiduciary relation exists. Q. vi. 152 may possibly suggest complete separation. But it may be an economy and an advantage to the orphan to have his property and accounts administered with the guardian's property and accounts and to have him live in the guardian's household or to marry into the guardian's family especially where the orphan's property is small and he or she has no other friend. The test is what is best in the orphan's interests? If the guardian does fall into temptation, even if human law does not detect him, he is told he is sinning in God's sight and that should keep him straight.

The man who means mischief  
From the man who means good  
And if God had wished,  
He could have put you  
Into difficulties He is  
Indeed Exalted, Wise " 245

الْمُفْسِدَ مِنَ الْمُصْلِحِ  
وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَأَغْنَيْنَاكُمْ  
إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ٥

- 221 Do not marry  
Unbelieving women,  
Until they believe  
A slave woman who believes  
Is better than an unbelieving  
woman,  
Even though she allure you  
Nor marry (your girls)  
To unbelievers until  
They believe  
A man slave who believes  
Is better than an unbeliever,  
Even though he allure you 246  
Unbelievers do but  
Beckon you to the Fire  
But God beckons by His Grace  
To the Garden (of Bliss)  
And forgiveness,  
And makes His Signs  
Clear to mankind  
That they may  
Celebrate His praise

٢٢١- وَلَا تَنْكِحُوا الْمُشْرِكِيْنَ حَتَّى يُؤْمِنُوْا  
وَلَا امْرَاةٌ مُّؤْمِنَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ مُّشْرِكَةٍ  
وَلَوْ اَعْجَبَتْكُمْ  
وَلَا تَنْكِحُوا الْمُشْرِكِيْنَ حَتَّى يُؤْمِنُوْا  
وَلَعَبْدٌ مُّؤْمِنٌ  
خَيْرٌ مِّنْ مُّشْرِكٍ وَلَوْ اَعْجَبَكُمْ  
اُولَٰئِكَ يَدْعُوْنَ اِلَى النَّارِ  
وَاللّٰهُ يَدْعُوْا اِلَى الْجَنَّةِ  
وَالْمَغْفِرَةِ بِاِذْنِهٖ  
وَيُبَيِّنُ اٰيٰتِهٖ لِلنَّاسِ  
لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُوْنَ ٥

#### SECTION 28.

- 222 They ask thee  
Concerning women's courses.  
Say They are  
A hurt and a pollution 247

٢٢٢- وَيَسْأَلُوْنَكَ عَنِ الْمَيْمٰنِ  
قُلْ هُوَ اَذْيٌ

245 The idea in Islam is not to make God's law a burdensome fetter but to ease a man's path in all kinds of difficult situations by putting him on his honour and trusting him. The strictest probity is demanded of him, but if he falls short of it he is told that he cannot escape God's punishment even though he may evade human punishment.

246 Marriage is a most intimate communion and the mystery of sex finds its highest fulfilment when intimate spiritual harmony is combined with the physical link. If religion is at all the real influence in life to both parties or to either party a difference in this vital matter must affect the lives of both more profoundly than differences of birth, race, language or position in life. It is therefore only right that the parties to be married should have the same spiritual outlook. If two persons love each other, their outlook in the highest things of life must be the same. Note that religion is not here a mere label or a matter of custom or birth. The two persons may have been born in different religions but if by their mutual influence they come to see the truth in the same way they must openly accept the same rites and the same social brotherhood. Otherwise the position will become impossible individually and socially.

247 *Aḥan* hurt, pollution. Both aspects must be remembered. Physical cleanliness and purity make for health, bodily and spiritual. But the matter should be looked at from the woman's point of view as well as the man's. To her there is danger of hurt, and she should have every consideration. In the animal world, instinct is a guide which is obeyed. Man should in this respect be better. He is often worse.

So keep away from women  
In their courses, and do not  
Approach them until  
They are clean.  
But when they have  
Purified themselves,  
Ye may approach them  
In any manner, time, or place <sup>248</sup>  
Ordnained for you by God  
For God loves those  
Who turn to Him constantly  
And He loves those  
Who keep themselves pure and  
clean

223. Your wives are  
As a tilth <sup>249</sup> unto you,  
So approach your tilth  
When or how ye will,  
But do some good act  
For your souls beforehand,  
And fear God,  
And know that ye are  
To meet Him (in the Hereafter),  
And give (these) good tidings <sup>250</sup>  
To those who believe

224. And make not  
God's (name) an excuse  
In your oaths against  
Doing good, or acting rightly,  
Or making peace  
Between persons,

فَاعْتَرِضُوا لِلنِّسَاءِ فِي الْمَحِيضِ  
وَلَا تَقْرُبُوهُنَّ حَتَّى يَطْهَرْنَ  
وَإِذَا طَهَّرْنَ

فَاتَّوْهُنَّ مِنْ حَيْثُ أَمَرَكُمُ اللَّهُ  
إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ  
وَيُحِبُّ الْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ

۲۲۳- نِسَاءُكُمْ حَرْثٌ لَكُمْ  
فَاتُوا حَرْثَكُمْ أَنَّى شِئْتُمْ  
وَقَدْ مَوَّالَ أَنْفُسِكُمْ  
وَالْعَوَالِدِ

وَاخْلُوهَا أَنْفُسَكُمْ مُلْقُوهُ  
وَيُبَشِّرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

۲۲۴- وَلَا تَجْعَلُوا اللَّهَ عُرْصَةً  
لِأَيْسَارِكُمْ أَنْ تَبَرُّوا

وَتَقُولُوا وَتَصِلُ حَوَافِلُ النَّاسِ

248. *Haniku* A comprehensive word referring to manner, time, or place. The most delicate matters are here referred to in the most discreet and yet helpful terms. In sex morality, manner, time and place are all important, and the highest standards are set by social laws, by our own refined instinct of mutual consideration and above all by the light shed by the highest Teachers from the wisdom which they receive from our Maker, Who loves purity and cleanliness in all things.

249 Sex is not a thing to be ashamed of, or to be treated lightly, or to be indulged to excess. It is as solemn a fact as any in life. It is compared to a husbandman's tilth, it is a serious affair to him, he sows the seed in order to reap the harvest. But he chooses his own time and mode of cultivation. He does not sow out of season nor cultivate in a manner which will injure or exhaust the soil. He is wise and considerate and does not run riot. Coming from the simile to human beings, every kind of mutual consideration is required, but above all, we must remember that even in these matters there is a spiritual aspect. We must never forget our souls, and that we are responsible to God.

It was carnal minded men who invented the doctrine of original sin. Behold, says the Psalmist, "I was shapen in iniquity and in sin did my mother conceive me" (Psalms li 5). This is entirely repudiated by Islam, in which the office of father and mother is held in the highest veneration. Every child of pure love is born pure. Celibacy is not necessarily a virtue, and may be a vice.

250 Our highest spiritual ambition should be the hope of meeting God. To uphold such a hope is to give glad tidings to people of faith. It would only be unrepentant sinners who would fear the meeting. Note how the most sensuous matters are discussed frankly, and immediately taken up into the loftiest regions of spiritual upliftment.

For God is One  
Who heareth and knoweth <sup>251</sup>  
All things

وَاللّٰهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ۝

225 God will not  
Call you to account  
For thoughtlessness  
In your oaths,  
But for the intention  
In your hearts, <sup>252</sup>  
And He is  
Oft-forgiving  
Most Forbearing

٢٢٥- لَا يُؤْخَذُ كُمْ اللّٰهُ  
بِالْغَوْرِ فِيْ اَيْمَانِكُمْ  
وَلَكِنْ يُؤْخَذُ كُمْ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ قُلُوبُكُمْ  
وَاللّٰهُ غَفُوْرٌ حَلِيْمٌ ۝

226 For those who take  
An oath for abstention  
From their wives,  
A waiting for four months  
Is ordained,  
If then they return,  
God is Oft-forgiving,  
Most Merciful

٢٢٦- لِلَّذِيْنَ يُؤْثِرُوْنَ مِنْ نِّسَا۟ئِهِمْ  
تَرْكُضَ اَرْبَعَةِ اَشْهُرٍ  
فَاِنْ فَا۟ءَوْوْا  
فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ۝

227 But if their intention  
Is firm for divorce,  
God heareth  
And knoweth all things <sup>253</sup>

٢٢٧- وَاِنْ عَزَمُوا الطَّلَاقَ  
فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيْمٌ ۝

228 **D**ivorced women  
Shall wait concerning themselves

٢٢٨- وَالْمُطَلَّقٰتُ يَتَرَكْنَ

251 The Arabs had many special kinds of oaths for each of which they had a special name in their language. Some of them related to sex matters and caused misunderstanding alienation division or separation between husband and wife. This and the following three verses refer to them. In v 224 we are first of all told in perfectly general terms that we are not to make an oath in the name of God an excuse for not doing the right thing when it is pointed out to us or for refraining from doing something which will bring people together. If we were swayed by anger or passion or mere caprice God knows our inmost hearts and right conduct and not obstinacy or quibbling is what He demands from us.

252 It has been held that thoughtless oaths if there is no intention behind them can be expiated by an act of charity.

253 Vv 225 27 should be read together with v 224. The latter though it is perfectly general, leads up to the other three.

The Pagan Arabs had a custom very unfair to women in wedlock and this was suppressed by Islam. Sometimes in a fit of anger or caprice a husband would take an oath by God not to approach his wife. This deprived her of conjugal rights but at the same time kept her tied to him indefinitely, so that she could not marry again. If the husband was remonstrated with he would say that his oath by God bound him. Islam in the first place disapproved of thoughtless oaths but insisted on proper solemn intentional oaths being scrupulously observed. In a serious matter like that affecting a wife if the oath was put forward as an excuse the man is told that it is no excuse at all. God looks to intention not mere thoughtless words. The parties are allowed a period of four months to make up their minds and see if an adjustment is possible. Reconciliation is recommended, but if they are really determined against reconciliation it is unfair to keep them tied indefinitely. Divorce is the only fair and equitable course though as the Apostle has declared of all things permitted divorce is the most hateful in the sight of God. In the circumstances God will forgive, for He knows the real grievances of each of the parties and will hear the cry of all who suffer.

For three monthly periods  
Nor is it lawful for them  
To hide what God  
Hath created in their wombs,  
If they have faith  
In God and the Last Day  
And their husbands  
Have the better right  
To take them back  
In that period, if  
They wish for reconciliation <sup>254</sup>  
And women shall have rights  
Similar to the rights  
Against them, according  
To what is equitable,  
But men have a degree  
(Of advantage) over them <sup>255</sup>  
And God is Exalted, Wise

## SECTION 29

- 229 **A** divorce is only <sup>256</sup>  
Permissible twice after that,  
The parties should either hold  
Together on equitable terms,  
Or separate with kindness <sup>257</sup>  
It is not lawful for you,  
(Men), to take back  
Any of your gifts (from your  
wives),  
Except when both parties  
Fear that they would be  
Unable to keep the limits

بِأَنفُسِهِنَّ ثَلَاثَةَ قُرُوءٍ  
وَلَا يَحِلُّ لَهُنَّ  
أَنْ يَكْتُمْنَ مَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ فِي أَرْحَامِهِنَّ  
إِنْ كُنَّ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ  
وَيَعُولَتُهُنَّ أَحَقُّ بِرَدِّهِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ إِنْ  
أَرَادُوا إِصْلَاحًا  
وَلَهُنَّ مِثْلُ الَّذِي عَلَيْهِنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ  
وَاللِّبَالُ عَلَيْهِنَّ دَرَجَةً  
وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ

٢٢٩

٢٢٩- الطَّلَاقُ مَرَّتَيْنِ  
مِمَّا سَأَلَ بِمَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ تَسْرِيحٍ  
بِإِحْسَانٍ  
وَلَا يَحِلُّ لَكُمْ أَنْ تَأْخُذُوا مِمَّا  
أَتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ شَيْئًا  
إِلَّا أَنْ يُخَافَا أَلَّا يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ اللَّهِ

254 Islam tries to maintain the married state as far as possible especially where children are concerned but it is against the restriction of the liberty of men and women in such vitally important matters as love and family life. It will check hasty action as far as possible and leave the door to reconciliation open at many stages. Even after divorce a suggestion of reconciliation is made subject to certain precautions (mentioned in the following verses) against thoughtless action. A period of waiting ('iddat) for three monthly courses is prescribed in order to see if the marriage conditionally dissolved is likely to result in issue. But this is not necessary where the divorced woman is a virgin. Q xxxiii 49. It is definitely declared that women and men shall have similar rights against each other.

255 The difference in economic position between the sexes makes the man's rights and liabilities a little greater than the woman's. Q iv 34 refers to the duty of the man to maintain the woman, and to a certain difference in nature between the sexes. Subject to this, the sexes are on terms of equality in law and in certain matters the weaker sex is entitled to special protection.

256 Where divorce for mutual incompatibility is allowed, there is danger that the parties might act hastily then repent, and again wish to separate. To prevent such capricious action repeatedly a limit is prescribed. Two divorces (with a reconciliation between) are allowed. After that the parties must definitely make up their minds, either to dissolve their union permanently, or to live honourable lives together in mutual love and forbearance—to hold together on equitable terms, neither party worrying the other nor grumbling nor evading the duties and responsibilities of marriage.

257 If a separation is inevitable, the parties should not throw mud at each other, but recognise what is right and honourable on a consideration of all the circumstances. In any case a man is not allowed to ask back for any gifts or property he may have given to the wife. This is for the protection of the economically weaker sex. Lest that protective provision itself work against the woman's freedom, an exception is made in the next clause.



Ordained by God <sup>258</sup>

If ye (judges) do indeed  
Fear that they would be  
Unable to keep the limits  
Ordained by God,  
There is no blame on either  
Of them if she give  
Something for her freedom  
These are the limits  
Ordained by God,  
So do not transgress them  
If any do transgress  
The limits ordained by God,  
Such persons wrong  
(Themselves as well as others) <sup>259</sup>

فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ اللَّهِ  
فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا فِيمَا افْتَدَتْ  
بِهِ  
تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ  
فَلَا تَعْتَدُوهَا  
وَمَنْ يَتَعَدَّ حُدُودَ اللَّهِ  
فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ ○

230 So if a husband  
Divorces his wife (irrevocably), <sup>260</sup>  
He cannot, after that,  
Re-marry her until  
After she has married  
Another husband and  
He has divorced her  
In that case there is  
No blame on either of them  
If they re-unite, provided  
They feel that they  
Can keep the limits  
Ordained by God  
Such are the limits  
Ordained by God,  
Which He makes plain  
To those who understand

٢٣٠- فَإِنْ طَلَّقَهَا  
فَلَا تَحِلُّ لَهُ  
مِنْ بَعْدُ حَتَّى تَنْكِحَ زَوْجًا غَيْرًا  
فَإِنْ طَلَّقَهَا  
فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا  
أَنْ يَتَرَاجَعَا إِنْ ظَنَّا أَنْ يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ  
اللَّهِ  
وَتِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ  
يُسَبِّحُهَا الْقَوْمُ يَعْلَمُونَ ○

231 When ye divorce <sup>261</sup>  
Women, and they fulfil

٢٣١- وَإِذَا طَلَّقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَبَلَغْنَ

258 All the prohibitions and limits prescribed here are in the interests of good and honourable lives for both sides and in the interests of a clean and honourable social life without public or private scandals. If there is any fear that in safeguarding her economic rights her very freedom of person may suffer the husband refusing the dissolution of marriage and perhaps treating her with cruelty then in such exceptional cases it is permissible to give some material consideration to the husband but the need and equity of this should be submitted to the judgment of impartial judges : e properly constituted courts. A divorce of this kind is called *khula*

259 *Wrong (themselves as well as others) Zulmān* for the root meaning of *ulm* see n 51 ii 35

260 This is in continuation of the first sentence of v 229. Two divorces followed by re union are permissible the third time the divorce becomes irrevocable until the woman marries some other man and he divorces her. This is to set an almost impossible condition. The lesson is if a man loves a woman he should not allow a sudden gust of temper or anger to induce him to take hasty action. What happens after two divorces if the man takes her back? See v 231

261 If the man takes back his wife after two divorces he must do so only on equitable terms : e he must not put pressure on the woman to prejudice her rights in any way and they must live clean and honourable lives respecting each other's personalities. There are here two conditional clauses (1) when ye divorce women and (2) when they fulfil their *Iddat* followed by two consequential clauses (3) take them back on equitable terms, or (4) set them free with kindness. The first is connected with the third and the second with the fourth. Therefore if the husband wishes to resume the marital relations he need not wait for *Iddat*. But if he does not so wish she is free to marry some one else after *Iddat*. For the meaning of *Iddat* see n 254 above



The term of their ('Iddat),  
 Either take them back  
 On equitable terms  
 Or set them free  
 With kindness,  
 But do not take them back  
 To injure them, (or) to take  
 Undue advantage, <sup>262</sup>  
 If any one does that,  
 He wrongs his own soul  
 Do not treat God's Signs  
 As a jest, <sup>263</sup>  
 But solemnly rehearse <sup>264</sup>  
 God's favours on you,  
 And the fact that He  
 Sent down to you  
 The Book  
 And Wisdom,  
 For your instruction  
 And fear God,  
 And know that God  
 Is well acquainted  
 With all things

أَجَلَهُنَّ فَأَمْسِكُوهُنَّ بِمَعْرُوفٍ  
 أَوْ سَرِّحُوهُنَّ بِمَعْرُوفٍ  
 وَلَا تُمْسِكُوهُنَّ ضِرَارًا لِّتَعْتَدُوا  
 وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ  
 فَقَدْ ظَلَمَ نَفْسَهُ  
 وَلَا تَتَّخِذُوا آيَاتِ اللَّهِ هُزُوًا  
 وَادْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ  
 وَمَا أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ  
 مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَالْحِكْمَةِ  
 يَعِظُكُمْ بِهِ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ  
 وَاعْلَمُوا  
 أَنَّ اللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ۝

## SECTION 30

232 **W**hen ye divorce  
 Women, and they fulfil  
 The term of their ('Iddat),  
 Do not prevent them -<sup>265</sup>  
 From marrying  
 Their (former) husbands,  
 If they mutually agree  
 On equitable terms  
 This instruction  
 Is for all amongst you,  
 Who believe in God  
 And the Last Day  
 That is (the course

٢٣٢- وَإِذَا طَلَقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَلْيُكُنَّ أَجَلُهُنَّ  
 فَلَا تَعْضُلُوهُنَّ أَنْ يَنْكِحْنَ أَزْوَاجَهُنَّ  
 إِذَا تَرَاضَوْا بَيْنَهُمْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ  
 ذَلِكَ يُوعَظُ بِهِ  
 مَنْ كَانَ مِنْكُمْ  
 يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ

262 Let no one think that the liberty given to him can be used for his own selfish ends. If he uses the law for the injury of the weaker party his own moral and spiritual nature suffers.

263 These difficult questions of sex relations are often treated as a joke. But they profoundly affect our individual lives, the lives of our children and the purity and well being of the society in which we live. This aspect of the question is reiterated again and again.

264 Rehearse *sikr* Cf II 151 and n 156. We are asked to remember in our own minds and to proclaim and praise and be proud of God's favours on us. His favours are immeasurable, not the least are His Revelations, and the wisdom which He has given to us to enable us to judge and act up to His guidance.

265 The termination of a marriage bond is a most serious matter for family and social life. And every lawful device is approved which can equitably bring back those who have lived together, provided only there is mutual love and they can live on honourable terms with each other. If these conditions are fulfilled it is not right for outsiders to prevent or hinder re-union. They may be swayed by property or other considerations. This verse was occasioned by an actual case that was referred to the holy Apostle in his lifetime.

Making for) most virtue  
And purity amongst you  
And God knows,  
And ye know not

233 **¶** The mothers shall give suck <sup>266</sup>

To their offspring  
For two whole years,  
If the father desires  
To complete the term  
But he shall bear the cost  
Of their food and clothing  
On equitable terms  
No soul shall have  
A burden laid on it  
Greater than it can bear  
No mother shall be  
Treated unfairly  
On account of her child,  
Nor father  
On account of his child  
An heir shall be chargeable  
In the same way  
If they both decide  
On weaning,  
By mutual consent,  
And after due consultation,  
There is no blame on them  
If ye decide  
On a foster-mother  
For your offspring,  
There is no blame on you,  
Provided ye pay (the mother)  
What ye offered,  
On equitable terms  
But fear God and know  
That God sees well  
What ye do

234 **¶** If any of you die  
And leave widows behind,

ذَلِكُمْ أَزْكَىٰ لَكُمْ وَأَطْهَرُ  
وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ٥

٢٣٣- وَالْوَالِدَتُ يُرْضِعْنَ أَوْلَادَهُنَّ  
حَوْلَيْنِ كَامِلَيْنِ  
لِمَنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يُتِمَّ الرَّضَاعَةَ  
وَعَلَى الْمَوْلُودِ لَهُ رِزْقُهُنَّ  
وَكِسْوَتُهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ  
لَا تُكَلَّفُ نَفْسٌ إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا  
لَا نُضَآءُ وَالِدَةٍ بِوَلَدِهَا  
وَلَا مَوْلُودٌ لَهُ بِوَلَدِهِ  
وَعَلَى الْوَارِثِ مِثْلُ ذَلِكَ  
فَإِنْ أَرَادَا فِصَالًا عَنْ تَرَاجُسٍ مِنْهُمَا  
وَتَشَاوُرٍ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا  
وَإِنْ أَرَدْتُمْ  
أَنْ تَسْتَرْضِعُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ  
فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ  
إِذَا سَلَّمْتُمْ مَا آتَيْتُم بِالْمَعْرُوفِ  
وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ  
وَاَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ٥

٢٣٤- وَالَّذِينَ يَتَوَفَّوْنَ مِنْكُمْ وَيَذَرُونَ

266 As this comes in the midst of the regulations on divorce it applies primarily to cases of divorce where some definite rule is necessary as the father and mother would not, on account of the divorce probably be on good terms and the interests of the children must be safeguarded. As however the wording is perfectly general, it has been held that the principle applies equally to the father and mother in wedlock each must fulfil his or her part in the fostering of the child. On the other hand, it is provided that the child shall not be used as an excuse for driving a hard bargain on either side. By mutual consent they can agree to some course that is reasonable and equitable both as regards the period before weaning (the maximum being two years) and the engagement of a wet nurse or (by analogy) for artificial feeding. But the mother's privileges must not be curtailed simply because by mutual consent she does not nurse the baby. In a matter of this kind the ultimate appeal must be to godliness for all legal remedies are imperfect and may be misused.



A gift of a reasonable amount  
Is due from those  
Who wish to do the right thing

مَتَاعًا بِالْمَعْرُوفِ حَقًّا عَلَى الْمُحْسِنِينَ ○

- 237 And if ye divorce them  
Before consummation,  
But after the fixation  
Of a dower for them,  
Then the half of the dower  
(Is due to them), unless  
They remit it  
Or (the man's half) is remitted <sup>269</sup>  
By him in whose hands  
Is the marriage tie, <sup>270</sup>  
And the remission  
(Of the man's half)  
Is the nearest to righteousness  
And do not forget  
Liberality between yourselves  
For God sees well  
All that ye do

٢٣٧- وَإِنْ طَلَقْتُمُوهُنَّ  
مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تَمْسُوهُنَّ وَقَدْ فَرَضْتُمْ  
لَهُنَّ فَرِيضَةً فَنِصْفُ مَا فَرَضْتُمْ  
إِلَّا أَنْ يَعْفُونَ  
أَوْ يَعْفُوا الَّذِي  
بِيَدِهِ عَقْدَةُ الزَّكَاءِ  
وَأَنْ تَعْفُوا أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَى  
وَلَا تَسْأُوا الْفَضْلَ بَيْنَكُمْ  
إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ○

- 238 Guard strictly  
Your (habit of) prayers,  
Especially the Middle Prayer, <sup>271</sup>  
And stand before God  
In a devout (frame of mind)

٢٣٨- حُفِظُوا عَلَى الصَّلَوَاتِ  
وَالصَّلَاةِ الْوُسْطَى  
وَقُومُوا لِلَّهِ قَانِتِينَ ○

239. If ye fear (an enemy), <sup>272</sup>  
Pray on foot, or riding,  
(As may be most convenient),  
But when ye are  
In security, celebrate  
God's praises in the manner  
He has taught you,  
Which ye knew not (before)

٢٣٩- فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ فَرِجَالًا أَوْ رُكْلًا  
فَإِذَا أَمِنْتُمْ فَأَذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ  
كَمَا عَلَّمَكُمْ  
مَّا لَمْ تَكُونُوا تَعْلَمُونَ ○

<sup>269</sup> The law declares that in such a case half the dower fixed shall be paid by the man to the woman. But it is open to the woman to remit the half due to her or to the man to remit the half which he is entitled to deduct, and thus pay the whole.

<sup>270</sup> Him in whose hands is the marriage tie. According to Hanafi doctrine this is the husband himself who can ordinarily by his act dissolve the marriage. It therefore behoves him to be all the more liberal to the woman and pay her the full dower even if the marriage was not consummated.

<sup>271</sup> The Middle Prayer *Ṣalātul wuṣṭā* may be translated 'the best or the most excellent prayer'. Authorities differ as to the exact meaning of this phrase. The weight of authorities seems to be in favour of interpreting this as the 'Aṣr prayer (in the middle of the afternoon). This is apt to be most neglected, and yet this is the most necessary, to remind us of God in the midst of our worldly affairs. There is a special Sūra (S. ciii) entitled *Asr* of which the mystic meaning is appropriately dealt with under that Sūra.

<sup>272</sup> Vv 238-39 are parenthetical, introducing the subject of prayer in danger. This is more fully dealt with in iv 102.

240 Those of you  
Who die and leave widows  
Should bequeath  
For their widows  
A year's maintenance  
And residence, <sup>273</sup>  
But if they leave  
(The residence),  
There is no blame on you  
For what they do  
With themselves,  
Provided it is reasonable  
And God is Exalted, Wise

۲۴۰- وَالَّذِينَ يُتَوَفَّوْنَ مِنْكُمْ وَيَذَرُونَ  
أَزْوَاجًا ۖ وَصِيَّةً لِّأَزْوَاجِهِمْ  
مَّتَاعًا إِلَى الْحَوْلِ غَيْرَ إِخْرَاجٍ  
فَلَنْ خَرْجَنَّ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ  
فِي مَا فَعَلْنَ فِي أَنْفُسِهِنَّ مِنْ مَّعْرُوفٍ  
وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ۝

241 For divorced women  
Maintenance (should be provided)  
On a reasonable (scale)  
This is a duty  
On the righteous

۲۴۱- وَلِلْمُطَلَّقاتِ مَتَاعٌ بِالمَعْرُوفِ  
حَقًّا عَلَى الْمُتَّقِينَ ۝

242 Thus doth God  
Make clear His Signs  
To you in order that  
Ye may understand

۲۴۲- كَذَٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ  
لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ۝

C 51 — Fighting in defence of Truth and Right  
(“ 243 253 ) Is not to be undertaken light-heartedly,  
Nor to be evaded as a duty  
Life and Death are in the hands of God  
Not all can be chosen to fight  
For God It requires constancy,  
Firmness, and faith Given these,  
Large armies can be routed  
By those who battle for God,  
As shown by the courage of David,  
Whose prowess single-handed  
Disposed of the Philistines  
The mission of some of the apostles,  
Like Jesus, was different,—  
Less wide in scope than that  
Of Mustafā God's plan  
Is universal, and He carries it out  
As He wills

273 Opinions differ whether the provision (of a year's maintenance, with residence) for a widow is abrogated by the share which the widow gets (one eighth or one fourth) as an heir (Q iv 12) I do not think it is. The bequest (where made) takes effect as a charge on the property, but the widow can leave the house before the year is out, and presumably the maintenance then ceases

## SECTION 32

243. **Didst** thou not  
Turn by vision to those  
Who abandoned their homes,  
Though they were thousands  
(In number), for fear of death?  
God said to them 'Die'  
Then He restored them to life <sup>274</sup>  
For God is full of bounty  
To mankind, but  
Most of them are ungrateful

244 Then fight in the cause  
Of God, and know that God  
Heareth and knoweth all things <sup>275</sup>

245 Who is he  
That will loan to God  
A beautiful loan, <sup>276</sup> which God  
Will double unto his credit  
And multiply many times?  
It is God that giveth (you)  
Want or Plenty,  
And to Him shall be  
Your return

246 **Fast** thou not  
Turned thy vision to the Chiefs  
Of the Children of Israel  
After (the time of) Moses? <sup>277</sup>

٢٢٣- الْمَرْتَرِ إِلَى الَّذِينَ خَرَجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ  
وَهُمْ أَلُوفٌ حَذَرَ الْمَوْتِ  
فَقَالَ لَهُمُ اللَّهُ مُوتُوا ثُمَّ أَحْيَاهُمْ  
إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَى النَّاسِ  
وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَشْكُرُونَ ○

٢٢٤- وَقَاتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ  
وَعَلِمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ○

٢٢٥- مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي  
يُقْرِضُ اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا  
فِيضِعْفَهُ لَهُ أَضْعَافًا كَثِيرَةً  
وَاللَّهُ يَقْبِضُ وَيَبْطِطُ  
وَالِيهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ○

٢٢٦- الْمَرْتَرِ إِلَى الْمَلَا  
مِنْ بَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مُوسَى

274 We now return to the subject of *Jihād* which we left at vv 214 216 We are to be under no illusion about it. If we are not prepared to fight for our faith with our lives and all our resources, both our lives and our resources will be wiped out by our enemies. As to life God gave it and a coward is not likely to save it. It has happened again and again in history that men who tamely submitted to be driven from their homes although they were more numerous than their enemies had the sentence of death pronounced on them for their cowardice and they deserved it. But God gives further and further chances in His mercy. This is a lesson to every generation. The Commentators differ as to the exact episode referred to but the wording is perfectly general and so is the lesson to be learnt from it.

275 For God's cause we must fight but never to satisfy our own selfish passions or greed for the warning is repeated. God heareth and knoweth all things all deeds words and motives are perfectly open before Him however we might conceal them from men or even from ourselves. See II 216 n.

276 Spending in the cause of God is called metaphorically a beautiful loan. It is excellent in many ways (1) it shows a beautiful spirit of self denial (2) in other loans there may be a doubt as to the safety of your capital or any return thereon here you give to the Lord of All in Whose hands are the keys of want or plenty, giving you may have manifold blessings and withholding, you may even lose what you have. If we remember that our goal is God can we turn away from His cause?

277 The next generation after Moses and Aaron was ruled by Joshua who crossed the Jordan and settled the tribes in Palestine. His rule lasted for 25 years after which there was a period of 320 years when the Israelites had a chequered history. They were not united among themselves, and suffered many reverses at the hands of the Midianites Amalekites and other tribes of Palestine. They frequently lapsed into idolatry and deserted the worship of the true God. From time to time a leader appeared among them who assumed dictatorial powers. Acting under a sort of theocratic commission from God he pointed out their backslidings re united them under His banner, and restored, from time to time and place to place the power of Israel. These dictators are called Judges in the English translation of the Old Testament. The last of their line was Samuel, who marks the transition towards the line of Kings on the one hand and of the later Prophets on the other. He may be dated approximately about the 11th century B.C.

They said to a Prophet <sup>278</sup>  
 (That was) among them  
 "Appoint for us a King  
 To fight in the cause of God"  
 He said "Is it not possible <sup>279</sup>  
 That ye may be commanded  
 To fight, and that ye  
 Will not fight?" They said  
 "How could we refuse  
 To fight in the cause of God,  
 Seeing that we were turned out  
 Of our homes and our families?"  
 But when they were commanded  
 To fight, they turned back,  
 Except a small band  
 Among them But God  
 Has full knowledge of those  
 Who do wrong

247 Their Prophet said to them  
 "God hath appointed  
 Talūt <sup>280</sup> as king over you"  
 They said "How can he  
 Exercise authority over us  
 When we are better fitted  
 Than he to exercise authority,  
 And he is not even gifted,  
 With wealth in abundance?"  
 He said "God hath  
 Chosen him above you,  
 And hath gifted him  
 Abundantly with knowledge  
 And bodily prowess God

إِذْ قَالُوا لِلنَّبِيِّ  
 لَهُمُ ابْعَثْ لَنَا مَلِكًا يُقَاتِلُ فِي سَبِيلِ  
 اللَّهِ قَالُوا هَلْ عَسَيْتُمْ إِنْ كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ  
 الْقِتَالُ أَنْ تَقَاتِلُوا  
 قَالُوا وَمَا لَنَا أَنْ نَقَاتِلَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ  
 وَقَدْ أُخْرِجْنَا مِنْ دِيَارِنَا وَأَبْنَاءِنَا  
 قَالُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقِتَالُ  
 تَوَلَّوْا إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِنْهُمْ  
 وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِالظَّالِمِينَ ○

٢٤٧ - وَقَالَ لَهُمْ نَبِيُّهُمْ  
 إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ بَعَثَ لَكُمْ طَالُوتَ مَلِكًا  
 قَالُوا أَلَيْكَ يَكُونُ لَهُ الْمُلْكُ عَلَيْنَا  
 وَنَحْنُ أَحَقُّ بِالْمُلْكِ مِنْهُ  
 وَلَمْ يُوْتِ سَعَةً مِنَ الْمَالِ  
 قَالَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَاهُ عَلَيْكُمْ  
 وَزَادَهُ بَسْطَةً فِي الْعِلْمِ وَالْجِسْمِ

278 This was Samuel. In his time Israel had suffered from much corruption within and many reverses without. The Philistines had made a great attack and defeated Israel with great slaughter. The Israelites, instead of relying on Faith and their own valour and cohesion, brought out their most sacred possession, the Ark of the Covenant, to help them in the fight. But the enemy captured it, carried it away and retained it for seven months. The Israelites forgot that wickedness cannot screen itself behind a sacred relic. Nor can a sacred relic help the enemies of faith. The enemy found that the Ark brought nothing but misfortune for themselves and were glad to abandon it. It apparently remained twenty years in the village (*oarys*) of Ya ārim (Kirjath yearim). I Samuel vii 2. Meanwhile the people pressed Samuel to appoint them a king. They thought that a king would cure all their ills, whereas what was wanting was a spirit of union and discipline and a readiness on their part to fight in the cause of God.

279 Samuel knew as a Prophet that the people were fickle and only wanted to cover their own want of union and true spirit by asking for a king. They replied with spirit in words, but when it came to action, they failed. They hid themselves in caves and rocks or ran away and even those who remained followed him trembling." I Samuel xiii 6-7.

280 Talūt is the Arabic name for Saul who was tall and handsome but belonged to the tribe of Benjamin, the smallest tribe in Israel. His worldly belongings were slender, and it was when he went out to search for some asses which had been lost from his father's house that he met Samuel and was anointed king by him. The people's fickleness appeared immediately he was named. They raised all sorts of petty objections to him. The chief consideration in their minds was selfishness, each one wanted to be leader and king himself, instead of desiring sincerely the good of the people as a whole, as a leader should do.

Granteth His power to whom  
He pleaseth God careth  
For all, and He knoweth  
All things "

وَاللّٰهُ يُؤْتِي مُلْكَهُ مَن يَّشَاءُ  
وَاللّٰهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ٥

- 248 And (further) their Prophet  
Said to them " A Sign  
Of his authority  
Is that there shall come  
To you the Ark of the Covenant,<sup>281</sup>  
With (an assurance) therein  
Of security<sup>282</sup> from your Lord,  
And the relics left  
By the family of Moses  
And the family of Aaron,  
Carried by angels<sup>283</sup>  
In this is a Symbol  
For you if ye indeed  
Have faith "

٢٢٨- وَقَالَ لَهُمْ نَبِيُّهُمْ

إِنَّ آيَةَ مُلْكِهِ

أَنْ يَأْتِيَكُمُ التَّابُوتُ فِيهِ سَكِينَةٌ  
مِّنْ رَبِّكُمْ وَبَقِيَّةٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ آلُ مُوسَىٰ

وَأَلْ هَارُونَ تَحْمِلُهُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ ٥

إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَةً لِّكُم

إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُّؤْمِنِينَ ٥

### SECTION 33

- 249 **W**hen Tālūt set forth  
With the armies, he said<sup>284</sup>  
"God will test you  
At the stream if any  
Drinks of its water,  
He goes not with my army  
Only those who taste not  
Of it go with me  
A mere sip out of the hand  
Is excused " But they all  
Drank of it, except a few  
When they crossed the river,—  
He and the faithful ones with him,—  
They said " This day<sup>285</sup>  
We cannot cope  
With Goliath and his forces "

٢٢٩- فَلَمَّا نَاصِلَ طَأَلُوتُ بِالْجُنُودِ ٥

قَالَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مُتَبَلِّغُكُمْ بِرَهْءٍ

فَمَنْ شَرِبَ مِنْهُ فَلَيْسَ مِنِّي ٥

وَمَنْ لَّمْ يَطْعَمْهُ فَإِنَّهُ مِنِّي ٥

إِلَّا مَنِ اعْتَرَفَ غُرْفَةً بِيَدِهِ ٥

فَشَرِبُوا مِنْهُ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِّنْهُمْ فَلَمَّا جَاوَزَهُ

هُوَ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَعَهُ ٥

قَالُوا لَا طَاقَةَ لَنَا الْيَوْمَ بِغَالُوتَ وَجُنُودِهِ ٥

281 *Ark of the Covenant* *Tāhūt* a chest of acacia wood covered and lined with pure gold about 5 ft × 3 ft × 3 ft See Exod xxv 10 22 It was to contain the testimony of God or the Ten Commandments engraved on stone with relics of Moses and Aaron Its gold lid was to be the ' Mercy Seat' with two cherubims of beaten gold with wings outstretched This was a sacred possession to Israel It was lost to the enemy in the early part of Samuel's ministry see second note to II 246 when it came back it remained in a village for twenty years and was apparently taken to the capital when kingship was instituted It thus became a symbol of unity and authority

282 *Security* *sakīna*=safety tranquility, peace Later Jewish writings use the same word for a symbol of God's Glory in the Tabernacle or tent in which the Ark was kept or in the Temple when it was built by Solomon

283 *Carried by angels* these words refer to the Tabūt or Ark the cherubims with outstretched wings on the lid may well be supposed to carry the security or peace which the Ark symbolised

284 A Commander is hampered by a large force if it is not in perfect discipline and does not whole heartedly believe in its Commander He must get rid of all the doubtful ones as did Gideon before Saul, and Henry V in Shakespeare's story long afterwards Saul used the same test as Gideon he gave a certain order when crossing a stream the greater part disobeyed and were sent back Gideon's story will be found in Judges vii 2 7

285 Even in the small band that remained faithful, there were some who were appalled by the number of the enemy when they met him face to face, and saw the size and strength of the enemy Commander, the giant Goliath (*Jālūt*) But there was a very small band who were determined to face all odds because they had perfect confidence in God and in the cause for which they were fighting They were for making a firm stand and seeking God's help Of that number was David see next note



But those who were convinced  
That they must meet God,  
Said "How oft, by God's will,  
Hath a small force  
Vanquished a big one?  
God is with those  
Who steadfastly persevere "

250 When they advanced  
To meet Goliath and his forces,  
They prayed "Our Lord!  
Pour out constancy on us  
And make our steps firm  
Help us against those  
That reject faith "

251 By God's will,  
They routed them,  
And David <sup>286</sup> slew Goliath,  
And God gave him  
Power and wisdom  
And taught him  
Whatever (else) He willed <sup>287</sup>  
And did not God  
Check one set of people  
By means of another,  
The earth would indeed  
Be full of mischief  
But God is full of bounty  
To all the worlds <sup>288</sup>

252 These are the Signs  
Of God we rehearse them  
<sup>2</sup> To thee in truth verily  
<sup>30</sup> Thou art one of the Apostles

قَالَ الَّذِينَ يَكْفُرُونَ أَتَسْمَعُونَ مَاذَا يَقُولُ  
كَمْ مِنْ فِئَةٍ قَلِيلَةٍ  
غَلَبَتْ فِئَةً كَثِيرَةً بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ  
وَاللَّهُ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ ○

٢٥٠- وَلَمَّا بَرَزُوا لِجَالُوتَ وَجُنُودِهِ  
قَالُوا رَبَّنَا آفِرْ عَلَيْنَا صَبْرًا  
وَتَيِّتْ أَقْدَامَنَا  
وَانصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ ○

٢٥١- فَهَزَمُوهُمْ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ  
وَقَتَلَ دَاوُدُ جَالُوتَ  
وَأَتَاهُ اللَّهُ الْمُلْكَ  
وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَعَلَّمَهُ مَا يَشَاءُ  
وَلَوْلَا دَفْعُ اللَّهِ النَّاسَ بَعْضَهُمُ بِبَعْضٍ  
لَفَسَدَتِ الْأَرْضُ  
وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ ذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ ○

٢٥٢- تِلْكَ آيَاتُ اللَّهِ نَتْلُوهَا عَلَيْكَ بِالْحَقِّ  
وَإِنَّكَ لَمِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ ○

286 Note how the whole story is compressed into a few words as regards narration, but its spiritual lessons are dwelt upon from many points of view. The Old Testament is mainly interested in the narrative which is full of detail but says little about the universal truths of which every true story is a parable. The Quran assumes the story but tells the parable.

David was a raw youth with no arms or armour. He was not known even in the Israelite camp and the giant Goliath mocked him. Even David's own elder brother chided him for deserting his sheep for he was a poor shepherd lad to outward appearance but his faith had made him more than a match for the Philistine hosts. When Saul offered his own armour and arms to David the young hero declined as he had not tried them while his shepherd's sling and staff were his well tried implements. He picked up five smooth pebbles on the spot from the stream and used his sling to such effect that he knocked down Goliath. He then used Goliath's own sword to slay him. There was consternation in the Philistine army they broke and fled and were pursued and cut to pieces.

Apart from the main lesson that if we would preserve our national existence and our faith it is our duty to fight with courage and firmness there are other lessons in David's story. (1) numbers do not count, but faith, determination and the blessing of God. (2) size and strength are of no avail against truth, courage and careful planning. (3) the hero tries his own weapons and those that are available to him at the time and place even though people may laugh at him. (4) if God is with us the enemy's weapon may become an instrument of his own destruction. (5) personality conquers all dangers and puts heart into our own wavering friends. (6) pure faith brings God's reward, which may take many forms, in David's case it was Power, Wisdom and other gifts see next note.

287 David was not only a shepherd, a warrior, a king, a wise man, and a prophet, but was also endowed with the gifts of poetry and music. His Psalms (*zabūr*) are still extant.

288 God's plan is universal. He loves and protects all His creatures and His bounties are for all worlds (12 n). To protect one He may have to check another, but we must never lose faith that His love is for all in boundless measure.

## 253 Those apostles

We endowed with gifts,  
 Some above others <sup>289</sup>  
 To one of them God spoke, <sup>290</sup>  
 Others He raised  
 To degrees (of honour), <sup>291</sup>  
 To Jesus the son of Mary  
 We gave Clear (Signs), <sup>292</sup>  
 And strengthened him  
 With the holy spirit  
 If God had so willed,  
 Succeeding generations  
 Would not have fought  
 Among each other, after  
 Clear (Signs) had come to them,  
 But they (chose) to wrangle,  
 Some believing and others  
 Rejecting If God had so willed,  
 They would not have fought  
 Each other, but God  
 Fulfilleth His plan <sup>293</sup>

٢٥٣- تِلْكَ الرُّسُلُ  
 فَصَّلْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ مِنْهُمْ مَنْ  
 كَلَّمَ اللَّهُ وَرَفَعَ بَعْضَهُمْ دَرَجَاتٍ  
 وَآتَيْنَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ الْبَيِّنَاتِ  
 وَأَيَّدْنَاهُ بِرُوحِ الْقُدُسِ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ  
 مَا اقْتَتَلَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ  
 مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَتْهُمْ الْبَيِّنَاتُ وَلَكِنْ  
 اخْتَلَفُوا فَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ آمَنَ وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ  
 كَفَرَ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مَا اقْتَتَلُوا  
 وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَفْعَلُ مَا يُرِيدُ ۝

الرسوليات

٢٥٣

## C 52 — Who can describe the nature of God ?

(u 254 283) The Living, the Eternal His Throne  
 Extends over worlds and worlds  
 That no imagination can compass  
 His truth is clear as daylight how  
 Can compulsion advance Religion ?  
 The keys of Life and Death, and the mysteries  
 Of everything around us, are in His hands  
 Our duty then is to seek the path  
 Of goodness, kindness, upright  
 Conduct and Charity,—to grasp

289 Different gifts and different modes of procedure are prescribed to God's Apostles in different ages and perhaps their degrees are different though it is not for us mortals with our imperfect knowledge to make any difference between one and another of God's Apostles (u 136) As this winds up the argument about fighting three illustrations are given from the past how it affected God's Messengers To Moses God spoke in clouds of glory he led his men for forty years through the wilderness mainly fighting against the unbelief of his own people he organised them to fight with the sword for Palestine but was raised to God's mercy before his enterprise ripened and it fell to Joshua to carry out his plan David though a mere shepherd boy was chosen by God He overthrew the greatest warrior of his time became a king and waged successful wars being also a prophet, a poet and a musician Jesus was strengthened with the holy spirit he was given no weapons to fight and his mission was of a more limited character In Muhammad's mission these and other characters were combined Gentler than Jesus, he organised on a vaster scale than Moses and from Medina he ruled and gave laws and the Qurān has a vaster scope than the Psalms of David

290 Moses see note above

291 There is a two fold sense they were raised to high posts of honour, and they rose by degrees I take the reference to be to David

292 Cf u 87

293 If some power of choice was to be given to man, his selfishness inevitably caused divisions It must not be supposed that it frustrates God's Plan He carries it out as He will,

At no advantage from a brother's need,  
To stand by the word that is pledged,  
To bear true witness, and remove all cause  
Of misunderstandings in our dealings  
As between man and man

## SECTION 34

- 254 **O**h ye who believe !  
Spend out of (the bounties) <sup>294</sup>  
We have provided for you,  
Before the Day comes  
When no bargaining  
(Will avail), no friendship  
Nor intercession <sup>295</sup>  
Those who reject Faith  
Injure (only themselves)
- 255 **G**od ! There is no god  
But He,—the Living,  
The Self-Subsisting, Eternal <sup>296</sup>  
No slumber can seize Him  
Nor sleep His are all things  
In the heavens and on earth  
Who is there can intercede  
In His presence except  
As He permitteth ? He knoweth  
What (appeareth to His creatures

۲۵۴- يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا  
اَنْفِقُوْا مِمَّا رَزَقْنٰكُمْ  
مِّنْ قَبْلِ اَنْ يَّاْتِيَ يَوْمٌ لَاَ بَیْعٌ فِيْهِ  
وَلَا خُلَّةٌ وَلَا شَفَاعَةٌ  
وَ الْكٰفِرُوْنَ هُمُ الظّٰلِمُوْنَ ۝

۲۵۵- اَللّٰهُ لَا اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ  
الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّوْمُ  
لَا تَاْخُذُهٗ سِنَةٌ وَّلَا نَوْمٌ  
لَّهٗ مَا فِى السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِى الْاَرْضِ  
مَنْ ذَا الَّذِىْ يَشْفَعُ عِنْدَهٗ اِلَّا بِاِذْنِهٖ

294 *Spend* : i.e., give away in charity or employ in good works but do not hoard. Good works would in Islam include everything that advances the good of one that is in need whether a neighbour or a stranger or that advances the good of the community or even the good of the person himself to whom God has given the bounty. But it must be real good and there should be no admixture of baser motives such as vainglory or false indulgence or encouragement of idleness or playing off one person against another. The bounties include mental and spiritual gifts as well as wealth and material gifts.

295 Cf. u 123 and u 48

296 This is the *Ayat-ul Kursi*, the Verse of the Throne. Who can translate its glorious meaning or reproduce the rhythm of its well chosen and comprehensive words? Even in the original Arabic the meaning seems to be greater than can be expressed in words.

The attributes of God are so different from anything we know in our present world that we have to be content with understanding that the only fit word by which we can name Him is "He,"—the pronoun standing for His name. His name—God or Allāh—is sometimes misused and applied to other beings or things and we must emphatically repudiate any idea or suggestion that there can be any compeer of God the one true living God. He lives but His life is self subsisting and eternal: it does not depend upon other beings and is not limited to time and space. Perhaps the attribute of *Qayyūm* includes not only the idea of "Self subsisting" but also the idea of "Keeping up and maintaining all life," His life being the source and constant support of all derived forms of life. Perfect life is perfect activity, in contrast to the imperfect life which we see around us, which is not only subject to death but to the need for rest or slowed down activity (something which is between activity and sleep for which I in common with other translators have used the word "slumber") and the need for full sleep itself. But God has no need for rest or sleep. His activity like His life is perfect and self subsisting. Contrast with this the expression used in Psalms lxxviii 65. Then the Lord awaked as one out of sleep, and like a mighty man that shouteth by reason of wine.

As) Before or After or Behind <sup>297</sup>  
 Nor shall they compass  
 Aught of His knowledge  
 Except as He willeth  
 His Throne doth extend <sup>298</sup>  
 Over the heavens  
 And the earth, and He feeleth  
 No fatigue in guarding  
 And preserving them <sup>299</sup>  
 For He is the Most High,  
 The Supreme (in glory)

يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ  
 وَلَا يُحِيطُونَ بِشَيْءٍ مِنْ عِلْمِهِ  
 إِلَّا بِمَا شَاءَ  
 وَسِعَ كُرْسِيُّهُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ  
 وَلَا يَئُودُهُ حِفْظُهُمَا  
 وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْعَظِيمُ

256 Let there be no compulsion <sup>300</sup>  
 In religion Truth stands out  
 Clear from Error whoever  
 Rejects Evil and believes  
 In God hath grasped  
 The most trustworthy  
 Hand-hold, that never breaks <sup>301</sup>  
 And God heareth  
 And knoweth all things

۲۵۶- لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ  
 قَدْ تَبَيَّنَ الرُّشْدُ مِنَ الْغَيِّ  
 مَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِالطَّاغُوتِ وَيُؤْمِنْ بِاللَّهِ  
 فَقَدْ اسْتَمْسَكَ بِالْعُرْوَةِ الْوُثْقَىٰ لَا انْفِصَامَ  
 لَهَا وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ

257 God is the Protector  
 Of those who have faith

۲۵۷- اللَّهُ وَلِيُّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا

297 After we realise that His Life is absolute Life His Being is absolute Being while others are contingent and evanescent our ideas of heaven and earth vanish like shadows What is behind that shadow is He Such reality as our heavens and our earth possess is a reflection of His absolute Reality The pantheist places the wrong accent when he says that everything is He The truth is better expressed when we say that everything is His How then can any creatures stand before Him as of right and claim to intercede for a fellow creature? In the first place both are His, and He cares as much for one as for the other In the second place they are both dependent on His will and command But He in His Wisdom and Plan may grade his creatures and give one superiority over another Then by His will and permission such a one may intercede or help according to the laws and duties laid on him God's knowledge is absolute and is not conditioned by Time or Space To us His creatures these conditions always apply His knowledge and our knowledge are therefore in different categories and our knowledge only gets some reflection of Reality when it accords with His Will and Plan

298 *Throne* seat power knowledge symbol of authority In our thoughts we exhaust everything when we say the heavens and the earth Well then in everything is the working of God's power and will and authority Everything of course includes spiritual things as well as things of sense Cf Wordsworth's fine outburst in *Tintern Abbey* 'Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns And the round ocean and the living air And in the blue sky and in the mind of man A motion and a spirit that impels all thinking things all objects of all thought And rolls through all things'

299 A life of activity that is imperfect or relative would not only need rest for carrying on its own activities but would be in need of double rest when it has to look after and guard or cherish or help our activities In contrast with this is the Absolute Life which is free from any such need or contingency For it is supreme above anything that we can conceive

300 Compulsion is incompatible with religion because (1) religion depends upon faith and will, and these would be meaningless if induced by force (2) Truth and Error have been so clearly shown up by the mercy of God that there should be no doubt in the minds of any persons of good will as to the fundamentals of faith (3) God's protection is continuous and His Plan is always to lead us from the depths of darkness into the clearest light

301 *Hand hold* something which the hands can grasp for safety in a moment of danger It may be a loop or a handle, or anchor If it is without flaw, so that there is no danger of breaking, our safety is absolutely assured so long as we hold fast to it Our safety then depends on our own will and faith, God's help and protection will always be unfailing if we hold firmly to God and trust in Him,

From the depths of darkness  
He will lead them forth  
Into light Of those  
Who reject faith the patrons  
Are the Evil Ones from light  
They will lead them forth  
Into the depths of darkness  
They will be Companions  
Of the fire, to dwell therein  
(For ever)

## SECTION 35

- 258 **فَاَسْتَخِرْتَهُ** hast thou not  
Turned thy vision to one  
Who disputed with Abraham<sup>302</sup>  
About his Lord, because  
God had granted him  
Power? Abraham said  
"My Lord is He Who  
Giveth life and death"  
He said "I give life and death"  
Said Abraham "It is God  
That causeth the sun  
To rise from the East  
Do thou then cause him  
To rise from the West"  
Thus was he confounded  
Who (in arrogance) rejected  
Faith Nor doth God  
Give guidance  
To a people unjust<sup>303</sup>

- 259 Or (take) the similitude  
Of one who passed

يُخْرِجُهُم مِّنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ  
وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ  
يُخْرِجُهُم مِّنَ النُّورِ إِلَى الظُّلُمَاتِ  
أُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ  
هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ٥

٢٥٨- أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِي حَاجَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ فِي  
رَبِّهِ أَنْ أَنْتَهُ اللَّهُ الْمَلِكُ  
إِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَبِّيَ الَّذِي يُبْعَثُ  
قَالَ أَنَا أَنبِيءُ وَأُمِّيَّتُ  
قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ  
يَأْتِي بِالسَّمْسِ مِنَ الْمَشْرِقِ  
فَأَتِ بِهَا مِنَ الْمَغْرِبِ  
فَبُهِتَ الَّذِي كَفَرَ  
وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ ٥

٢٥٩- أَوْ كَالَّذِي مَرَّ عَلَى قَرْيَةٍ

302 The three verses 258-260 have been the subject of much controversy as to the exact meaning to be attached to the incidents and the precise persons alluded to whose names are not mentioned. M. M. As learned notes give some indication of the points at issue. In such matters where the Qurān has given no names and the Holy Apostle has himself given no indication it seems to me useless to speculate and still worse to put forward positive opinions. In questions of learning speculations are often interesting. But it seems to me that the meaning of the Qurān is so wide and universal that we are in danger of missing the real and eternal meaning if we go on disputing about minor points. All three incidents are such as may happen again and again in any prophet's life time and be seen in impersonal vision at any time. Here they are connected with Muṣṭafā's vision as shown by the opening words of verse 258.

303 The first point illustrated is the pride of power and the impotence of human power as against God's power. The person who disputed with Abraham may have been Nimrod or some ruler in Babylonia or indeed elsewhere. I name Babylonia as it was the original home of Abraham (Ur of the Chaldees), and Babylon prided herself on her arts and sciences in the ancient world. Science can do many wonderful things; it could then, it can now. But the mystery of Life baffled science then as it continues to baffle science now after many centuries of progress. Abraham had faith, and referred back everything to the true Cause of Causes. A sceptical ruler might jestingly say "I have the power of life and death. A man of science might say 'We have investigated the laws of life and death. Different kinds of powers lie in the hands of kings and men of knowledge. The claim in both cases is true in a very limited sense. But Abraham confounded the claimer by going back to fundamentals. "If you had the ultimate power, why could you not make

By a hamlet, all in ruins<sup>304</sup>  
 To its roofs He said  
 "Oh! how shall God  
 Bring it (ever) to life,  
 After (this) its death?"  
 But God caused him  
 To die for a hundred years,  
 Then raised him up (again)  
 He said "How long  
 Didst thou tarry (thus)?"  
 He said "(Perhaps) a day  
 Or part of a day" He said  
 "Nay, thou hast tarried  
 Thus a hundred years,  
 But look at thy food  
 And thy drink, they show  
 No signs of age, and look  
 At thy donkey and that  
 We may make of thee  
 A Sign unto the people,  
 Look further at the bones,  
 How We bring them together  
 And clothe them with flesh"<sup>305</sup>  
 When this was shown clearly  
 To him, he said "I know  
 That God hath power  
 Over all things"

260 Behold! Abraham said ]  
 "My Lord! Show me how  
 Thou givest life to the dead"<sup>306</sup>  
 He said "Dost not thou  
 Then believe?" He said  
 "Yea! but to satisfy

وَهِيَ خَاوِيَةٌ عَلَى عُرُوشِهَا  
 قَالَ أَلَيْسَ لِي بِحَيٍّ هَذِهِ اللَّهُ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا  
 فَأَمَاتَهُ اللَّهُ مِائَةَ عَامٍ  
 ثُمَّ بَعَثَهُ قَالَ كَمْ لَبِثْتَ  
 قَالَ لَبِثْتُ يَوْمًا أَوْ بَعْضَ يَوْمٍ  
 قَالَ بَلْ لَبِثْتَ مِائَةَ عَامٍ  
 فَانْظُرْ إِلَى طَعَامِكَ  
 وَشَرَابِكَ لَمْ يَتَسَنَّهْ  
 وَانْظُرْ إِلَى حِمَارِكَ  
 وَلِنَجْعَلَكَ آيَةً لِلنَّاسِ  
 وَانْظُرْ إِلَى الْعِظَامِ كَيْفَ نُنْشِزُهَا  
 ثُمَّ نَكْسُوهَا لَحْمًا  
 فَلَمَّا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ قَالَ أَعْلَمُ  
 أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

٢٦٠ - وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَبِّ أَرِنِي كَيْفَ  
 تُحْيِي الْمَوْتَى قَالَ أَوَلَمْ تُؤْمِنْ  
 قَالَ بَلَى وَلَكِنْ لِيَطْمَئِنَّ قُلُوبِي

304 This incident is referred variously (1) to Ezekiel's vision of dry bones (Ezekiel xxxvii 1 10) (2) to Nehemiah's visit to Jerusalem in ruins after the Captivity and to its rebuilding (Nehemiah i 12 20) and (3) to Uzair or Ezra or Esdras the scribe priest and reformer who was sent by the Persian King after the Captivity to Jerusalem and about whom there are many Jewish legends. As to (1) there are only four words in this verse about bones. As to (2) and (3) there is nothing specific to connect this verse with either. The wording is perfectly general and we must understand it as general. I think it does refer not only to individual but to national death and resurrection.

305 A man is in despair when he sees the destruction of a whole people city or civilisation. But God can cause resurrection as He has done many times in history and as He will do at the final Resurrection. Time is nothing before God. The doubter thinks that he has been dead or tarried thus a day or less when the period has been a century. On the other hand the food and drink which he left behind is intact and as fresh as it was when he left it. But the donkey is not only dead but nothing but bones is left of it. And before the man's eyes the bones are reunited clothed with flesh and blood and restored to life. Moral (1) Time is nothing to God. (2) It affects different things in different ways. (3) The keys of life and death are in God's hands. (4) Man's power is nothing. His faith should be in God.

306 Verse 258 we saw illustrated God's power over Life and Death contrasted with man's vain boasts or imaginings. Verse 259 illustrated how Time is immaterial to God's working things, individuals and nations are subject to laws of life and death which are under God's complete control, however much we may be misled by appearances. Now in Verse 260 we are shown the power of wisdom and love if man can tame birds so that they know him and fly to him how much more will God's creatures obey His call at the Resurrection?

My own understanding "307  
He said "Take four birds,  
Tame them to turn to thee,  
Put a portion<sup>308</sup> of them  
On every hill, and call to them  
They will come to thee  
(Flying) with speed  
Then know that God  
Is Exalted, Wise "

## SECTION 36

- 261 The parable of those  
Who spend their substance  
In the way of God is that  
Of a grain of corn it groweth  
Seven ears, and each ear  
Hath a hundred grains  
God giveth manifold increase  
To whom He pleaseth  
For God careth for all  
And He knoweth all things
- 262 Those who spend  
Their substance in the cause  
Of God, and follow not up  
Their gifts with reminders  
Of their generosity  
Or with injury,—  
Their reward is with their Lord  
On them shall be no fear,  
Nor shall they grieve
- 263 Kind words<sup>309</sup>  
And the covering of faults

قَالَ خُذْ أَرْبَعَةً مِنَ الطَّيْرِ  
فَصْرَهُنَّ إِلَيْكَ  
ثُمَّ اجْعَلْ عَلَى كُلِّ جَبَلٍ مِنْهُنَّ جُزْءًا  
ثُمَّ ادْعُهُنَّ يَأْتِينَكَ سَعْيًا  
وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ۝

٢٦١- مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ  
فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ حَبَّةٍ أَنْبَتَتْ سَبْعَ  
سُنَابِلٍ فِي كُلِّ سُنبُلَةٍ  
مِائَةُ حَبَّةٍ وَاللَّهُ يُضَاعِفُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ  
وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ۝

٢٦٢- الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ  
اللَّهِ ثُمَّ لَا يُتَّبِعُونَ مَا أَنْفَقُوا  
مَثًّا وَلَا اذْمًا  
لَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ  
وَلَا هَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ۝

٢٦٣- قَوْلٌ مَعْرُوفٌ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ

307 Abraham had complete faith in God's power but he wanted with God's permission to give an explanation of that faith to his own heart and mind Where I have translated "satisfy my own understanding" the literal translation would be "satisfy my own heart"

308 A portion of them Juz an The received Commentators understand this to mean that the birds were to be cut up and pieces of them were to be put on the hills The cutting up or killing is not mentioned but they say that it is implied by an ellipsis as the question is how God gives life to the dead Of the modern Muslim Commentators M P is non-committal but H G S and M M A, understand that the birds were not killed but that a portion here means a unit single birds were placed on hills and they flew to the one who tamed them This last view commends itself to me, as the cutting up of the birds to pieces is nowhere mentioned unless we understand the word for "taming" in an unusual and almost impossible sense

309 A very high standard is set for charity (1) It must be in the way of God (2) It must expect no reward in this world (3) It must not be followed by references or reminders to the act of charity (4) Still less should any annoyance or injury be caused to the recipient, e.g., by boasting that the giver relieved the person in the hour of need Indeed the kindness and the spirit which turns a blind eye to other people's faults or shortcomings is the essence of charity these things are better than charity if charity is spoiled by tricks that do harm At the same time while no reward is to be expected, there is abundant reward from God—material, moral and spiritual—according to His own good pleasure and plan If we spend in the way of God, it is not as if God was in need of our charity On the contrary our shortcomings are so great that we require His utmost forbearance before any good that we can do can merit His praise or reward Our motives are so mixed that our best may really be very poor if judged by a very strict standard



Are better than charity  
Followed by injury  
God is Free of all wants,  
And He is most Forbearing

خَيْرٌ مِنْ صَدَقَةٍ يَتَّبِعَهَا آذَىٰ  
وَاللَّهُ غَنِيٌّ حَلِيمٌ ٥

- 264 Oh ye who believe !  
Cancel not your charity  
By reminders of your generosity  
Or by injury,—like those  
Who spend their substance  
To be seen of men,  
But believe neither  
In God nor in the Last Day <sup>310</sup>  
They are like a hard,  
Barren rock, on which  
Is a little soil on it  
Falls heavy rain,  
Which leaves it  
(Just) a bare stone  
They will be able to do nothing  
With aught they have earned  
And God guideth not  
Those who reject faith

٢٦٤- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا  
لَا تُلْغُوا صَدَقَاتِكُمْ بِالْمَنِّ وَالْآذَىٰ  
كَالَّذِي يُنْفِقُ مَالَهُ رِثَاءَ النَّاسِ  
وَلَا يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ  
فَمَثَلُهُ كَمَثَلِ صَفْوَانٍ  
عَلَيْهِ تُرَابٌ فَأَصَابَهُ وَابِلٌ فَكُرَّهُ صَلْدًا  
لَا يَقْدِرُونَ عَلَىٰ شَيْءٍ  
مِمَّا كَسَبُوا  
وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْكَافِرِينَ ٥

- 265 And the likeness of those  
Who spend their substance,  
Seeking to please God  
And to strengthen their souls,  
Is as a garden, high  
And fertile heavy rain <sup>311</sup>  
But makes it yield  
A double increase  
Of harvest, and if it receives not  
Heavy rain, light moisture  
Sufficeth it God seeth well  
Whatever ye do

٢٦٥- وَمَثَلُ الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ  
ابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِ اللَّهِ  
وَتَثْبِيئًا مِنْ أَنْفُسِهِمْ كَمَثَلِ جَنَّةٍ بِرَبْوَةٍ  
أَصَابَهَا وَابِلٌ فَاتَتْ أَكْثُلَهَا ضِعْفَيْنِ  
فَإِنْ لَمْ يُمْسِكْهَا وَابِلٌ فَطُلْ  
وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ٥

310 False charity to be seen of men is really no charity. It is worse for it betokens a disbelief in God and the Hereafter. God seeth well whatever ye do (ii 265). It is compared to a hard barren rock on which by chance has fallen a little soil. Good rain which renders fertile soil more fruitful washes away the little soil which this rock had and exposes its nakedness. What good can hypocrites derive even from the little wealth they may have amassed?

311 True charity is like a field with good soil on a high situation. It catches good showers of rain the moisture penetrates the soil and yet its elevated situation keeps it well drained and healthy favourable conditions increase its output enormously. But supposing even that the rain is not abundant, it catches dew and makes the most of any little moisture it can get and that is sufficient for it. So a man of true charity is spiritually healthy, he is best situated to attract the bounties of God, which he does not hoard selfishly but circulates freely. In lean times he still produces good works and is content with what he has. He looks to God's pleasure and the strengthening of his own soul.



- 266 Does any of you wish  
That he should have a garden <sup>312</sup>  
With date-palms and vines  
And streams flowing  
Underneath, and all kinds  
Of fruit, while he is stricken  
With old age, and his children  
Are not strong (enough <sup>313</sup>  
To look after themselves) —  
That it should be caught  
In a whirlwind,  
With fire therein,  
And be burnt up?  
Thus doth God make clear  
To you His Signs,  
That ye may consider

## SECTION 37

- 267 **Q**h ye who believe!  
Give of the good things  
Which ye have (honourably)  
earned, <sup>314</sup>  
And of the fruits of the earth  
Which We have produced

٢٦٦- أَيُّدُ أَحَدِكُمْ أَنْ تَكُونَ لَهُ جَنَّةٌ  
مِنْ تَحْيَلٍ وَأَعْنَابٍ  
تَجْرَى مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ  
لَهُ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ  
وَأَصَابَهُ الْكِبَرُ وَلَهُ ذُرِّيَّةٌ ضُعَفَاءُ  
فَأَصَابَهَا إِعْصَارٌ فِيهِ نَارٌ فَاحْتَرَقَتْ  
كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ  
لَكُمْ الْآيَاتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَفَكَّرُونَ ٢٦٧

٢٦٧- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا  
انْفِقُوا مِنْ طَيِّبَاتِ مَا كَسَبْتُمْ  
وَمِمَّا أَخْرَجْنَا لَكُمْ مِنَ الْأَرْضِ

312 The truly spiritual nature of charity having been explained in three parables (*vv* 261, 264, 265) a fourth parable is now added explaining its bearing on the whole of our life. Suppose we had a beautiful garden well watered and fertile with delightful views of streams and a haven of rest for mind and body suppose old age were creeping in on us and our children were either too young to look after themselves or too feeble in health how should we feel if a sudden whirlwind came with lightning or fire in its train and burnt it up thus blasting the whole of our hopes for the present and for the future, and destroying the result of all our labour and savings in the past? Well this life of ours is a probation. We may work hard we may save we may have good luck. We may make ourselves a goodly pleasure and have ample means of support for ourselves and our children. A great whirlwind charged with lightning and fire comes and burns up the whole show. We are too old to begin again our children are too young or feeble to help us to repair the mischief. Our chance is lost because we did not provide against such a contingency. The whirlwind is the wrath to come the provision against it is a life of true charity and righteousness which is the only source of true and lasting happiness in this world and the next. Without it we are subject to all the vicissitudes of this uncertain life. We may even spoil our so called charity by insisting on the obligation which others owe to us or by doing some harm because our motives are not pure.

313 *Not strong (enough)* *qhu afā u* literally weak decrepit, infirm possibly referring to both health and will or character

314 According to the English proverb 'Charity covers a multitude of sins'. Such a sentiment is strongly disapproved in Islam. Charity has value only if (1) something good and valuable is given, (2) which has been honourably earned or acquired by the giver, or (3) which is produced in nature and can be referred to as a bounty of God. (1) may include such things as are of use and value to others though they may be of less use to us or superfluous to us on account of our having acquired something more suitable for our station in life for example discarded clothes or an old horse or a used motor car, but if the horse is vicious, or the car engine so far gone that it is dangerous to use, then the gift is worse than useless, it is positively harmful and the giver is a wrong doer. (2) applies to fraudulent company promoters who earn great credit by giving away in charity some of their ill gotten gains or to robbers (even if they call themselves by high sounding names) who rob Peter to pay Paul. Islam will have nothing to do with tainted property. Its economic code requires that every gain should be honest and honourable. Even 'charity' would not cover or destroy the taint. (3) lays down a test in cases of a doubtful gain. Can we refer to it as a gift of God? Obviously the produce of honest labour or agriculture can be so referred to. In modern commerce and speculation there is much of quite the contrary character, and charity will not cover the taint. Some kind of art, skill or talent are God given it is the highest kind of charity to teach them or share their product. Others are the contrary they are bad or tainted. In the same way some professions or services may be tainted, if these tend to moral harm.

For you, and do not even aim <sup>315</sup>  
 At getting anything  
 Which is bad, in order that  
 Out of it ye may give away  
 Something, when ye yourselves  
 Would not receive it  
 Except with closed eyes <sup>316</sup>  
 And know that God  
 Is Free of all wants,  
 And Worthy of all praise <sup>317</sup>

وَلَا تَتَمَنَّوْا الْخَبِيثَ  
 مِنْهُ تُنْفِقُونَ  
 وَلَسْتُمْ بِأَخِيذِهِ  
 إِلَّا أَنْ تُغِيضُوا فِيهِ  
 وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ حَمِيدٌ ۝

268 The Evil One threatens  
 You with poverty  
 And bids you to conduct  
 Unseemly God promiseth  
 You His forgiveness  
 And bounties <sup>318</sup>  
 And God careth for all  
 And He knoweth all things

٢٦٨- الشَّيْطَانُ يَعِدُكُمُ الْفَقْرَ  
 وَيَأْمُرُكُمْ بِالْفَحْشَاءِ  
 وَاللَّهُ يَعِدُكُم مَّغْفِرَةً مِنْهُ وَفَضْلًا  
 وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ۝

269 He granteth wisdom  
 To whom He pleaseth,  
 And he to whom wisdom  
 Is granted receiveth  
 Indeed a benefit overflowing,  
 But none will grasp the Message  
 But men of understanding

٢٦٩- يُؤْتِي الْحِكْمَةَ مَنْ يَشَاءُ  
 وَمَنْ يُؤْتَ الْحِكْمَةَ  
 فَقَدْ أُوتِيَ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا  
 وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّا أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ ۝

270 And whatever ye spend  
 In charity or devotion,  
 Be sure God knows it all  
 But the wrong-doers  
 Have no helpers

٢٧٠- وَمَا أَنْفَقْتُمْ مِنْ ثَفَقَةٍ  
 أَوْ أَنْذَرْتُمْ مِنْ نَذْرٍ إِلَّا اللَّهُ يَعْلَمُهَا  
 وَمَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِنْ أَنْصَارٍ ۝

315 The preceding note tries to indicate some of the things which are bad or tainted. We should not even think of acquiring them for ourselves, soothing our conscience by the salve that we shall practise charity out of them.

316 Closed eyes imply disgust or connivance because of some feature which we would not openly acknowledge.

317 To dedicate tainted things to God is a dishonour to God, Who is independent of all wants, and Who is worthy of all honour and praise.

318 Good and evil draw us opposite ways and by opposite motives and the contrast is well marked out in charity. When we think of doing some real act of kindness or charity we are assailed with doubts and fear of impoverishment but Evil supports any tendency to selfishness, greed or even to extravagant expenditure for show or self-indulgence or unseemly appetites. On the other hand God draws us on to all that is kind and good for that way lies the forgiveness of our sins, and greater real prosperity and satisfaction. No kind or generous act ever ruined any one. It is false generosity that is sometimes shown as leading to ruin. As God knows all our motives and cares for all and has everything in His power, it is obvious which course a wise man will choose. But wisdom is rare and it is only wisdom that can appreciate true well-being and distinguish it from the false appearance of well-being.

271 If ye disclose (acts<sup>319</sup>

Of) charity, even so

It is well,

But if ye conceal them,

And make them reach

Those (really) in need,

That is best for you

It will remove from you

Some of your (stains

Of) evil And God

Is well acquainted

With what ye do

٢٤١- إِنْ تُبْدُوا الصَّدَقَاتِ  
فَنِعْمَتْ هِيَ وَإِنْ تُخْفُوهَا  
وَتُؤْتُوهُمَا الْفُقَرَاءَ  
فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ  
وَيُكَفِّرْ عَنْكُمْ مِنْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ  
وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ ۝

272 It is not required

Of thee (Oh Apostle),

To set them on the right path,<sup>320</sup>

But God sets on the right path

Whom He pleaseth

Whatever of good ye give

Benefits your own souls,

And ye shall only do so

Seeking the glory<sup>321</sup>

Of God Whatever good

Ye give, shall be

Rendered back to you,

And ye shall not

Be dealt with unjustly

٢٤٢- لَيْسَ عَلَيْكَ هَذَا لَهُمْ  
وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَهْدِي مَنْ يُشَاءُ  
وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَلَا نَنْفُسُكُمْ  
وَمَا تُنْفِقُونَ  
إِلَّا اسْتِيعَاءً وَحَهُ اللَّهُ  
وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ  
يُؤْتِ الْيَتَامَى وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تُظْلَمُونَ ۝

273 (Charity is) for those

In need, who, in God's cause<sup>322</sup>

Are restricted (from travel),

And cannot move about

٢٤٣- لِلْفُقَرَاءِ الَّذِينَ  
أُخْصِرُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ لَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ

319 It is better to seek no publicity in charity But if it is known there is no harm If it is for public purposes it must necessarily be known and a pedantic show of concealment may itself be a fault The harm of publicity lies in motives of ostentation We can better reach the really deserving poor by quietly seeking for them The spiritual benefit enures to our own souls provided our motives are pure and we are really seeking the good pleasure of God

320 In connection with charity this means that we must relieve those really in need whether they are good or bad on the right path or not, Muslims or otherwise It is not for us to judge in these matters God will give light according to His wisdom Incidentally it adds a further meaning to the command Let there be no compulsion in religion (II 256) For compulsion may not only be by force but by economic necessity In matters of religion we must not even compel by a bribe of charity The chief motive in charity should be God's pleasure and our own spiritual good This was addressed in the first instance to Mustafa in Medina but it is of universal application

321 See note to II 112 *Wajh* means literally face, countenance, hence, favour, or glory

322 Indiscriminate acts of so called charity are condemned as they may do more harm than good (see v 262) The real beneficiaries of charity are here indicated They must be in want And the want must be due to some honourable cause For example, they may be doing some unpaid service such as teaching or acquiring knowledge or skill, or be in exile for their faith or in other ways be prevented from seeking employment or doing strenuous work God's cause must not be narrowly interpreted All sincere and real service to humanity comes within the definition, as well as actual devotion to religion or to the righteous Imam Such men do not beg from door to door It is the duty of those who are well-to-do, or of the Public Purse, to find them out

In the land, seeking  
For trade or work  
The ignorant man thinks,  
Because of their modesty,  
That they are free from want  
Thou shalt know them  
By their (unfailing) mark  
They beg not importunately  
From all and sundry  
And whatever of good  
Ye give, be assured  
God knoweth it well

## SECTION 38

- 274 Those who (in charity) <sup>323</sup>  
Spend of their goods  
By night and by day,  
In secret and in public,  
Have their reward  
With their Lord  
On them shall be no fear,  
Nor shall they grieve

- 275 Those who devour usury <sup>324</sup>  
Will not stand except  
As stands one whom  
The Evil One by his touch  
Hath driven to madness <sup>325</sup>  
That is because they say  
"Trade is like usury," <sup>326</sup>  
But God hath permitted trade

ضَرْبًا فِي الْأَرْضِ  
يَحْسَبُهُمُ الْجَاهِلُ أَعْيَاءَ مِنَ التَّعَفُّفِ  
تَعْرِفُهُمْ بِسِيمَاهُمْ  
لَا يَسْأَلُونَ النَّاسَ إِحْكَامًا  
وَمَا تَنْفِقُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ  
رَبِّ فَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِهِ عَلِيمًا ۝

٢٧٤-الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ بِاللَّيْلِ  
وَالنَّهَارِ سِرًّا وَعَلَانِيَةً  
فَلَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ  
وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ۝

٢٧٥-الَّذِينَ يَأْكُلُونَ الرِّبَا لَا يَقُومُونَ  
إِلَّا كَمَا يَقُومُ الَّذِي يَتَحَبَّطُهُ الشَّيْطَانُ  
مِنَ الْمَسِّ ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا إِنَّمَا الْبَيْعُ  
مِثْلُ الرِّبَا وَأَحَلَّ اللَّهُ الْبَيْعَ وَحَرَّمَ

323 We recapitulate the beauty of charity (i.e. unselfish giving of one's self or one's goods) before we come to its opposite i.e. the selfish grasping greed of usury against those in need or distress. Charity instead of impoverishing you will enrich you: you will have more happiness and less fear. Contrast it with what follows — the degradation of the grasping usurer.

324 Usury is condemned and prohibited in the strongest possible terms. There can be no question about the prohibition. When we come to the definition of Usury there is room for difference of opinion. Haqirrat Umar according to Ibn Kathir felt some difficulty in the matter as the Apostle left this world before the details of the question were settled. This was one of the three questions on which he wished he had had more light from the Apostle: the other two being Khilāfat and Kalālat (see iv 12 n 518). Our Ulama ancient and modern have worked out a great body of literature on Usury based mainly on economic conditions as they existed at the rise of Islam. I agree with them on the main principles but respectfully differ from them on the definition of Usury. As this subject is highly controversial I shall discuss it not in this Commentary but on a suitable occasion elsewhere. The definition I would accept would be: undue profit made not in the way of legitimate trade out of loans of gold and silver and necessary articles of food such as wheat, barley, dates and salt (according to the list mentioned by the Holy Apostle himself). My definition would include profiteering of all kinds, but exclude economic credit: the creature of modern banking and finance.


325 An apt simile: whereas legitimate trade or industry increases the prosperity and stability of men and nations, a dependence on Usury would merely encourage a race of idlers, cruel blood suckers and worthless fellows who do not know their own good and are therefore akin to madmen.

326 The sharp opposition between legitimate trade and usury supports my definition in the last note but one. *Bar* (literary Sale or Barter) is also used more generally for trade and commerce, and various kinds of transactions.

And forbidden usury  
Those who after receiving  
Direction from their Lord,  
Desist, shall be pardoned  
For the past, their case  
Is for God (to judge),  
But those who repeat  
(The offence) are Companions  
Of the Fire they will  
Abide therein (for ever)

- 276 God will deprive  
Usury of all blessing,  
But will give increase  
For deeds of charity  
For He loveth not  
Creatures ungrateful  
And wicked

- 277 Those who believe,  
And do deeds of righteousness,  
And establish regular prayers  
And regular charity,  
Will have their reward  
With their Lord  
On them shall be no fear,  
Nor shall they grieve <sup>327</sup>

- 278  Oh ye who believe !  
Fear God, and give up  
What remains of your demand  
For usury, if ye are  
Indeed believers

- 279 If ye do it not,  
Take notice of war <sup>328</sup>  
From God and His Apostle  
But if ye turn back,  
Ye shall have  
Your capital sums  
Deal not unjustly,  
And ye shall not  
Be dealt with unjustly

الرَّبُّوْا فَمَنْ حَاءَهُ مَوْعِظَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِ  
فَانْتَهَى فَلَهُ مَا سَلَفَ  
وَأَمْرُهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ  
وَمَنْ عَادَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ  
هُمْ فِيهَا حُلْدُونَ ○

٢٧٦- يَخْشَى اللَّهُ الرَّبُّوْا  
وَيُرِي الصَّدَقَاتِ  
وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ  
كُلَّ كَفَّارٍ أَشِيمٍ ○

٢٧٧- إِنَّ الدِّينَ أَمْرٌ وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ  
وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ  
لَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ  
وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ○

٢٧٨- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ  
وَدَرُّوا مَا بَقِيَ مِنَ الرِّبَا  
إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِرِينَ ○

٢٧٩- فَإِنْ لَّمْ تَفْعَلُوا فَأْذَنُوا بِحَرْبٍ  
مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَإِنْ تُبْتُمْ  
فَلَكُمْ رُءُوسُ أَمْوَالِكُمْ  
لَا تَظْلِمُونَ وَلَا تُظْلَمُونَ ○

<sup>327</sup> The contrast between charity and unlawful grasping of wealth began at v 274 where this phrase occurs as a theme. Here the theme finishes with the same phrase. The following four verses refer to further concessions on behalf of debtors, as creditors are asked to (a) give up even claims arising out of the past on account of usury, and (b) to give time for payment of capital if necessary, or (c) to write off the debt altogether as an act of charity.

<sup>328</sup> This is not war for opinions, but an ultimatum of war for the liberation of debtors unjustly dealt with and oppressed.

280 If the debtor is  
In a difficulty,  
Grant him time  
Till it is easy  
For him to repay  
But if ye remit it  
By way of charity,  
That is best for you  
If ye only knew

٢٨٠- وَإِنْ كَانَ ذُو عُسْرَةٍ  
فَنَظِرَةٌ إِلَىٰ مَيْسَرَةٍ  
وَأَنْ تَصَدَّقُوا خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ  
إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ٥

281 And fear the Day  
When ye shall be  
Brought back to God  
Then shall every soul  
Be paid what it earned,  
And none shall be  
Dealt with unjustly

٢٨١- وَاتَّقُوا يَوْمًا  
تُرْجَعُونَ فِيهِ إِلَى اللَّهِ  
تَمَّ ثَوَابُ كُلِّ نَفْسٍ مَّا كَسَبَتْ  
وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ٦

#### SECTION 39

282 **Oh** ye who believe !  
When ye deal with each other,  
In transactions involving  
Future obligations  
In a fixed period of time,  
Reduce them to writing<sup>329</sup>  
Let a scribe write down  
Faithfully as between  
The parties let not the scribe  
Refuse to write as God<sup>330</sup>  
Has taught him,  
So let him write  
Let him who incurs  
The liability dictate,  
But let him fear  
His Lord God,  
And not diminish  
Aught of what he owes  
If the party liable  
Is mentally deficient,

٢٨٢- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا  
إِذَا تَدَايَيْتُمْ بِدَيْنٍ  
إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى فَالْتُمُوا  
وَلْيَكُنْ بَيْنَكُمْ كَاتِبٌ بِالْعَدْلِ  
وَلَا بَأْسَ كَاتِبٌ  
أَنْ يَكْتُبَ كَمَا عَلَّمَهُ اللَّهُ فَلْيَكْتُبْ  
وَلْيُمْلِلِ الَّذِي عَلَيْهِ الْحَقُّ  
وَلْيَمِيقِ اللَّهُ رَبَّهُ  
وَلَا يَبْخَسْ مِنْهُ شَيْئًا  
فَإِنْ كَانَ الَّذِي عَلَيْهِ الْحَقُّ سَعِيًا

329 The first part of the verse deals with transactions involving future payment or future consideration and the second part with transactions in which payment and delivery are made on the spot. Examples of the former are if goods are bought now and payment is promised at a fixed time and place in the future or if cash is paid now and delivery is contracted for at a fixed time and place in the future. In such cases a written document is recommended but it is held that the words later on in this verse that it is juster more suitable as evidence and more convenient to prevent doubts etc imply that it is not obligatory in law. Examples of the latter kind—cash payment and delivery on the spot—require no evidence in writing, but apparently oral witnesses to such transactions are recommended.

330 The scribe in such matters assumes a fiduciary capacity he should therefore remember to act as in the presence of God with full justice to both parties. The art of writing he should look upon as a gift from God, and he should use it as in His service. In an illiterate population the scribe's position is still more responsible.

Or weak, or unable  
Himself to dictate,<sup>331</sup>  
Let his guardian  
Dictate faithfully  
And get two witnesses,  
Out of your own men,<sup>332</sup>  
And if there are not two men,  
Then a man and two women,  
Such as ye choose,  
For witnesses,  
So that if one of them errs,  
The other can remind her  
The witnesses  
Should not refuse  
When they are called on  
(For evidence)  
Disdain not to reduce  
To writing (your contract)  
For a future period,  
Whether it be small  
Or big it is juster  
In the sight of God,  
More suitable as evidence,  
And more convenient  
To prevent doubts  
Among yourselves  
But if it be a transaction  
Which ye carry out  
On the spot among yourselves,  
There is no blame on you  
If ye reduce it not  
To writing  
But take witnesses  
Whenever ye make  
A commercial contract,  
And let neither scribe  
Nor witness suffer harm  
If ye do (such harm),  
It would be wickedness  
In you So fear God,  
For it is God  
That teaches you  
And God is well acquainted  
With all things<sup>333</sup>

أَوْ ضَعِيفًا أَوْ لَا يَسْتَطِيعُ  
أَنْ يُدَيِّنَ هُوَ فَلْيُمْلِلْ وَلِيُّهُ بِالْعَدْلِ  
وَأَسْتَشْهِدْ وَاشْهَيْدَيْنِ  
مِنْ رِجَالِكُمْ فَإِنْ لَمْ يَكُونَا رَجُلَيْنِ  
فَرَجُلٌ وَامْرَأَتَيْنِ  
مِمَّنْ تَرْضَوْنَ مِنَ الشُّهَدَاءِ  
أَنْ تَضِلَّ إِحَدُهُمَا  
فَتَذْكُرَ إِحْدَاهُمَا الْآخَرَى  
وَلَا يَأْبَ الشُّهَدَاءُ إِذَا مَا دُعُوا  
وَلَا تَسْأَلُوا أَنْ تَكْتُوبَهُ  
صَغِيرًا أَوْ كَبِيرًا إِلَى أَجَلٍ  
ذَلِكَمْ أَقْسَطُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ  
وَأَقْوَمُ لِلشَّهَادَةِ وَأَدْنَى أَلَّا تَرْتَابُوا  
إِلَّا أَنْ تَكُونَ تِجَارَةً  
حَاصِرَةً  
تُدِيرُونَهَا بَيْنَكُمْ  
فَلَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ حُنَاحٌ أَلَّا تَكْتُوبَهَا  
وَأَشْهَدُوا إِذَا تَبَايَعْتُمْ  
وَلَا يُضَارَ كَاتِبٌ وَلَا شَهِيدٌ  
وَأَنْ تَعْمَلُوا بَيْنَهُ فُسُوقٌ بِكُمْ  
وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَيُعَلِّمُكُمُ اللَّهُ  
وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ۝

331 Possibly the person mentally deficient or weak or unable to dictate may also be incapable of making a valid contract and the whole duty would be on his guardian who again must act in perfect good faith not only protecting but vigilantly promoting the interests of his ward

332 It is desirable that the men (or women) who are chosen as witness should be from the circle to which the parties belong as they would best be able to understand the transaction, and be most easily available if their evidence is required in future

333 Commercial morality is here taught on the highest plane and yet in the most practical manner both as regards the bargains to be made the evidence to be provided the doubts to be avoided and the duties and rights of scribes and witnesses Probity even in worldly matters is to be not a mere matter of convenience or policy but a matter of conscience and religious duty Even our every day transactions are to be carried out as in the presence of God

283 ] If ye are on a journey,  
 And cannot find  
 A scribe, a pledge  
 With possession (may serve  
 The purpose) <sup>334</sup>  
 And if one of you  
 Deposits a thing  
 On trust with another, <sup>335</sup>  
 Let the trustee  
 (Faithfully) discharge  
 His trust, and let him  
 Fear his Lord  
 Conceal not evidence,  
 For whoever conceals it,—  
 His heart is tainted <sup>336</sup>  
 With sin And God  
 Knoweth all that ye do

۲۸۳-وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ  
 وَلَمْ تَجِدُوا كَاتِبًا  
 فَرِهْنِ مَقْرُوضَةً  
 فَإِنْ أَمِنَ بَعْضُكُم بَعْضًا  
 فَلْيُؤَدِّ الَّذِي أُؤْتِنَ أَمَانَتَهُ  
 وَلْيَتَّقِ اللَّهَ رَبَّهُ  
 وَلَا تَكْتُمُوا الشَّهَادَةَ  
 وَمَنْ تَكْتُمْهَا فَإِنَّهُ إِتَمَّ قَلْبُهُ  
 وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ عَلِيمٌ

C 53 —Our honesty and upright conduct  
 (ii 284 286) Are not mere matters of policy  
 Or convenience all our life in this world  
 Must be lived as in the presence of God  
 The finest example of Faith we have  
 In the Apostle's life full of faith,  
 Let us render willing obedience  
 To God's Will Our responsibility,  
 Though great, is not a burden  
 Greater than we can bear let us  
 Pray for God's assistance, and He will help

#### SECTION 40

284 ] To God belongeth all  
 That is in the heavens  
 And on earth Whether  
 Ye show what is in your minds  
 Or conceal it, God  
 Calleth you to account for it

۲۸۴-لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِي الْاَرْضِ  
 وَإِنْ تُبْدُوا مَا فِيْ اَنْفُسِكُمْ  
 اَوْ تُخْفُوْهُ يُحَاسِبْكُمْ بِهِ اللّٰهُ

334 A pledge or security stands on its own independent footing though it is a very convenient form of closing the bargain where the parties cannot trust each other and cannot get a written agreement with proper witnesses

335 The law of Deposit implies great trust in the Depositary on the part of the Depositor The Depositary becomes a trustee and the doctrine of Trust can be further developed on that basis The trustee's duty is to guard the interests of the person on whose behalf he holds the trust and to render back the property and accounts when required according to the terms of the trust This duty again is linked to the sanction of Religion which requires a higher standard than Law

336 It sometimes happens that if some inconvenient piece of evidence is destroyed or concealed, we gain a great advantage materially We are warned not to yield to such a temptation The concealment of evidence has a serious effect on our own moral and spiritual life for it taints the very source of higher life as typified by the heart The heart is also the seat of our secrets We are told that the sin will reach our most secret being though the sin may not be visible or open to the world Further the heart is the seat of our affections, and false dealing taints all our affections



He forgiveth whom He pleaseth,  
And punisheth whom He pleaseth  
For God hath power  
Over all things

فَيَغْفِرُ لِمَن يَشَاءُ وَيُعَذِّبُ مَن يَشَاءُ  
وَاللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ٥

285 The Apostle believeth  
In what hath been revealed  
To him from his Lord,  
As do the men of faith  
Each one (of them) believeth  
In God, His angels,  
His books, and His apostles <sup>337</sup>  
"We make no distinction (they say)  
Between one and another <sup>338</sup>  
Of His apostles " And they say  
"We hear, and we obey  
(We seek) Thy forgiveness, <sup>339</sup>  
Our Lord, and to Thee  
Is the end of all journeys "

٢٨٥- اٰمَنَ الرَّسُوْلُ بِمَا اُنْزِلَ اِلَيْهِ  
مِنْ رَّبِّهِ وَالْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ  
كُلٌّ اٰمَنَ بِاللّٰهِ وَمَلٰئِكَتِهِ  
وَكُتُبِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ  
لَا تَفْرِقُ بَيْنَ اَحَدٍ مِنْ رُسُلِهِ  
وَقَالُوا سَمِعْنَا وَاَطَعْنَا  
غُفْرَانَكَ رَبَّنَا وَاِلَيْكَ الْمَصِيْرُ ٥

286 On no soul doth God  
Place a burden greater  
Than it can bear <sup>340</sup>  
It gets every good that it earns,  
And it suffers every ill that it earns  
(Pray ) "Our Lord!  
Condemn us not  
If we forget or fall  
Into error, our Lord!  
Lay not on us a burden  
Like that which Thou  
Didst lay on those before us, <sup>341</sup>

٢٨٦- لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللّٰهُ نَفْسًا اِلَّا وُسْعَهَا  
لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَعَلَيْهَا مَا اكْتَسَبَتْ  
رَبَّنَا لَا تُؤَاخِذْنَا اِنْ نَسِينَا  
اَوْ اَخْطَاْنَا  
رَبَّنَا وَلَا تَحْمِلْ عَلَيْنَا  
اِصْرًا كَمَا حَمَلْتَهُ  
عَلَى الَّذِيْنَ مِنْ قَبْلِنَا

337 This Sūra started with the question of Faith (vv 3-4) showed us various aspects of Faith and the denial of Faith gave us ordinances for the new People of Islam as a community and now rounds off the argument again with a confession of Faith and of its practical manifestation in conduct ( we hear and we obey ) and closes on a note of humility so that we may confess our sins ask for forgiveness and pray for God's help and guidance

338 Cf 11 136 and 11 253 n It is not for us to make any distinction between one and another of God's apostles we must honour them all equally though we know that God in His wisdom sent them with different kinds of mission and gave them different degrees of rank

339 When our faith and conduct are sincere we realise how far from perfection we are and we humbly pray to God for the forgiveness of our sins We feel that God imposes no burden on us that we cannot bear and with this realisation in our hearts and in the confession of our lips, we go to Him and ask for His help and guidance

340 Cf 11 233 In that verse the burden was in terms of material wealth here it is in terms of spiritual duty Assured by God that He will accept from each soul just such duty as it has the ability to offer, we pray further on for the fulfilment of that promise

341 We must not be arrogant and think that because God has granted us His favour and mercy we have no need to exert ourselves, or that we are ourselves superior to those before us On the contrary knowing how much they failed we pray that our burdens should be lightened, and we confess our realisation that we have all the greater need for God's mercy and forgiveness

And so we end the whole argument of the Sūra with a prayer for God's help, not in our own selfish ends, but in our resolve to uphold God's truth against all Unbelief

Our Lord ! lay not on us  
 A burden greater than we  
 Have strength to bear  
 Blot out our sins,  
 And grant us forgiveness  
 Have mercy on us  
 Thou art our Protector,  
 Help us against those  
 Who stand against Faith "

رَبَّنَا وَلَا تُحِثْ عَلَيْنَا مَا لَا طَاقَةَ لَنَا بِهِ  
 وَاعْفُ عَنَّا  
 وَارْحَمْنَا أَنْتَ مَوْلَانَا  
 فَانصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ ۝



## APPENDIX I.

## THE ABBREVIATED LETTERS

*(Al Muqatta'at)*

Certain Sūras have certain initials prefixed to them, which are called the "Abbreviated Letters" A number of conjectures have been made as to their meaning Opinions are divided as to the exact meaning of each particular letter or combination of letters, but it is agreed that they have a mystic meaning

Mystic meaning, not intelligible at first sight, is not inconsistent with the character of the Qurān as a "plain book" The book of nature is also a plain book, but how few can fully understand it? Every one can get out of the Quran plain guidance for his life according to his capacity for spiritual understanding As his capacity grows, so will his understanding grow The whole Book is a Record for all time It must necessarily contain truths that only gradually unfold themselves to humanity Even parables and tales of mystic meaning employ symbolism The plain man may find the symbolism helpful, as a soldier finds his National Flag helpful But what proportion of British soldiers or citizens understands the full symbolism of the British Union Jack?

This is not a mystery of the same class as "mysteries" by which we are asked to believe against the dictates of reason If we are asked to believe that one is three and three is one, we can give no intelligible meaning to the words If we are asked to believe that certain initials have a meaning which will be understood in the fullness of time or of spiritual development, we are asked to draw upon Faith but we are not asked to do any violence to our reason

I shall try to discuss some of the probable meanings of any particular abbreviated letter or set of abbreviated letters on the first occasion on which it appears in the Qurān But it may be desirable here to take a general view of the facts of their occurrence to help us in appreciating the various views which are held about them

There are 29 letters in the Arabic alphabet (counting *hamza* and *alif* as two letters), and there are 29 Sūras which have abbreviated letters prefixed to them One of these Sūras (S xli) has two sets of abbreviated letters, but we need not count this Sūra twice If we take the half of the alphabet, omitting the fraction, we get 14, and this is the number of letters which actually occur in the Muqatta'at

The 14 letters, which occur in various combinations, are —

ه	ك	ص	ا
ي	ل	ط	ح
	م	ع	ر
	ن	ق	س

The science of phonetics tells us that our vocal sounds arise from the expulsion of the air from the lungs, and the sounds are determined by the way in which the breath passes through the various organs of speech, *e g*, the throat (guttural), or the various positions of the tongue to the middle or front of the palate or to the teeth, or the play of the lips Every one of these kinds of sounds is represented in these letters

Let us now examine the combinations

Three of these letters occur alone, prefixed each to only one Sūra The letters and Sūras are —

S xxxviii	م
S i	ك
S lxxviii	ن

The combinations of two letters occur in ten Sūras as shown below Three of them occur only once each, but the fourth ( حـمـ ) occurs in seven consecutive Sūras

S xx	طه
S xxvii	طس
S xxxvi	يس
S xl	} حم
S xli	
S xlii	
S xliii	
S xliv	
S xlv	
S xlv	

Note that S xlii has a double combination of abbreviated letters, one of two followed by one of three See under combinations of five

There are three combinations of three letters each, occurring as follows in 13 Sūras -

S ii	} الق
S iii	
S xxix	
S xxx	
S xxxi	
S xxxii	
S x	} الر
S xi	
S xii	
S xiv	
S xv	
S xxvi	} طسم
S xxviii	

Combinations of four letters occur twice, each only once —

S vii	القطن	* Note that the three preceding and the two following Suras have the triple letters الر
S xiii *	القز	

Finally there remain the combinations of five letters, each of which occurs once only, as follows —

S xix	كلميعص
S xlii	حم طسق

In S xlii the **ح** and **عسق** are put in separate verses. From that point of view they may be considered two separate combinations. The first combination has already been listed under the group of two letter combinations.

This arithmetical analysis brings certain facts into prominence. I do not know how far they have a bearing on the inner meaning of the *Muqatta'at*.

The combinations of abbreviated letters that run in a series in consecutive Sūras is noticeable. For example, **ح** occurs in six consecutive Sūras from xl to xlv.

The combination **الذ** occurs in six consecutive Sūras x to xv, but in one of them (S xiii) it is modified to **الذر**, connecting it with the **الذ** series. The **الذ** series covers 6 Sūras. It begins with S ii and S iii, which are practically the beginning of the Qurān, and ends with the four consecutive Sūras xxix to xxxii. I call S ii and S iii practically the beginning of the Qurān, because S i is considered a general intro-

duction to the Quran, and the first Sūrah is commonly known as **الف**, the first verse of S ii. The combination **طس** is prefixed to S xxvi and S xxviii, but the intervening

S xxvii has the combination **طس**, which may be considered a syncopated form, or the three-letter combination **طس** may be considered an extended form of **طس**. Again

the question arises: Does the **م** in **المر**, **م** and **طس**, stand for the same signification, or does it mean a different thing in each case? We may generalise and say that there are three series of six, and one series of three, and the others occur all singly.

We should logically look for a common factor in the Sūras bearing the same initials, and this factor should be different for Sūras bearing other initials. In all cases where the abbreviated letters occur, there is some mention of the Qurān or the Book. The *Iṭqān* makes an exception in the case of three Sūras, 'Ankabūt (S xxix), Rūm (S xxx), and Nūn (S lxviii). But a close perusal will show that these Sūras are no exceptions. In xxix 27 we have a reference to the Book remaining in the family of Abraham, and later on we have a whole Section (Rukū' No 5), devoted to the Book, with special reference to the continuity of revelation in the previous Books and the Qurān (xxix 45-51). In xxx 58 there is express mention of the Qurān, and the whole argument of the Sūra leads up to the intimate relation between God's "Signs" in nature (vv 20-27) and His revelation in the Qurān. In S lxviii the very first verse begins the theme with the Pen as the instrument of writing, exhorts Muṣṭafā to stand forth boldly to proclaim the Message, and ends (v 52) with the declaration that it is a Message for all the worlds.

These are general considerations, which I have thought it most convenient to present in the form of an Appendix.

INTRODUCTION TO SŪRA III (*Āl i-'Imrān*)

This Sūra is cognate to Sūra II, but the matter is here treated from a different point of view

Like Sūra II, it takes a general view of the religious history of mankind, with special reference to the People of the Book, proceeds to explain the birth of the new People of Islam and their ordinances, insists on the need of struggle and fighting in the cause of Truth, and exhorts those who have been blessed with Islam to remain constant in Faith, pray for guidance, and maintain their spiritual hope for the Future

The new points of view developed are (1) The emphasis is here laid on the duty of the Christians to accept the new light, the Christians are here specially appealed to, as the Jews were specially appealed to in the last Sūra, (2) the lessons of the battles of Badr and Uhud are set out for the Muslim community, and (3) the responsibilities of that community are insisted on both internally and in their relations to those outside

God having revealed His Book, confirming previous revelations, we must accept it in all reverence, try to understand its meaning, and reject the base motives which make Truth unacceptable to those who reject Faith (iii 1-20, and C 54 )

The People of the Book had only a portion of the Book and if they reject the complete Book, the People of Faith must part company with them, and their day is done (iii 21-30, and C 55 )

The story of the family of 'Imrān (the father of Moses) leads us from the Mosaic Dispensation to the miracles connected with the birth of Jesus and his ministry (iii 31-63, and C 56 )

God's revelation being continuous, all people are invited to accept its completion in Islam, and controversies are deprecated The Muslims are asked to hold together in union and harmony, and are promised security from harm from their enemies, and enjoined to seek friendship among their own people (iii 64-120, and C 57 )

The battle of Badr showed how God helps and upholds the virtuous, and how patience, perseverance, and discipline find their reward, on the other hand, the lessons of Uhud must be learnt, not in despair, but in the exercise of the higher virtues and in contempt of pain and death (iii 121-148, and C 58 )

The misfortunes at Uhud are shown to be due to the indiscipline of some, the indecision and selfishness of others, and cowardice on the part of the Hypocrites, but no enemy can hurt God's Cause (iii 149-180, and C 59 )

The taunts of the enemy should be disregarded, and sincere prayer offered to God, Who would grant them success and prosperity (iii 181-200, and C. 60 )

C 54 — The Quran revelation has, step by step,  
 (iii 1-20) Confirmed the Law of Moses and the Gospel  
 Of Jesus It is a guide from God,  
 And appeals to reason and understanding  
 Let us understand it rightly, in reverence  
 And truth, unswayed by those who reject  
 Faith, and seeking ever the reward  
 Of the pleasure of God, through firmness,  
 Patience, discipline, and charity, and offering others  
 The light which we have ourselves received.

## Sūra III

*Al-ʿImrān*, or The Family of 'Imrān*In the name of God, Most Gracious,  
Most Merciful*1 **A L M** <sup>342</sup>2 **G**od! There is no god  
Except He,—the Living,  
The Self-Subsisting, Eternal <sup>343</sup>3 It is He Who sent down  
To thee (step by step),  
In truth, the Book,  
Confirming what went before it,  
And He sent down the Law  
(Of Moses) and the Gospel <sup>344</sup>  
(Of Jesus) before this,  
As a guide to mankind,  
And the Criterion <sup>345</sup>  
(Of judgment between right and  
wrong)4 Then those who reject  
Faith in the Signs of God  
Will suffer the severest  
Penalty, and God  
Is Exalted, Lord of Retribution5 From God, verily  
Nothing is hidden  
On earth or in the heavens6 He it is Who shapes you  
In the wombs as He pleases <sup>346</sup>بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
١- اَلَمْ

٢- اَللّٰهُ لَا اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّوْمُ ۝

٣- نَزَّلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ  
مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ  
وَانزَلَ التَّوْرَةَ وَالْاِنْجِيلَ  
مِنْ قَبْلُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ  
وَانزَلَ الْفُرْقَانَ ۝٤- اِنَّ الدِّينَ كَفَرُوا بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ  
لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ  
وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ ذُو انتِقَامٍ ۝٥- اِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَخْفَىٰ عَلَيْهِ شَيْءٌ  
فِي الْاَرْضِ وَلَا فِي السَّمَاءِ ۝

٦- هُوَ الَّذِي يُصَوِّرُكُمْ فِي الْاَرْحَامِ كَيْفَ

342 See note to II 1

343 Cf II 255

344 In some editions the break between vv 3 and 4 occurs here in the middle of the sentence but in the edition of Ḥāfiẓ Uthmān followed by the Egyptian Concordance *Faith ur Rahmān* the break occurs at the word *Furqan*. In verse divisions our classicists have mainly followed rhythm. As the word *Furqān* from this point of view is parallel to the word *Intiqām* which ends the next verse I have accepted the verse division at *Furqān* as more in consonance with Quranic rhythm. It makes no real difference to the numbering of the verses, as there is only a question of whether one line should go into v 3 or v 4.

From this point onwards in this Sūra, M M A, followed by H G S, numbers the verses so that there is a deficiency of one compared with the accepted numbering in the most approved Texts which I have followed, including that of the Egyptian Royal Edition and that of our *Anjuman i Ḥimāyat i Islām*.

345 Criterion *Furqān* for meaning see II 53 n

346 Who can penetrate the mystery of life when a new life is just being born, except God? The reference to the mystery of birth prepares us for the mystery of the birth of Jesus mentioned in v 41 and the following verses.

There is no god  
Except He, the Exalted,  
The Wise

- 7 **I**n it is Who has sent down  
To thee the Book  
In it are verses  
Basic or fundamental  
(Of established meaning),  
They are the foundation <sup>347</sup>  
Of the Book others  
Are allegorical But those  
In whose hearts is perversity  
Follow the part that is allegorical,  
Seeking discord, and searching  
For its hidden meanings,  
But no one knows  
Its hidden meanings except God  
And those who are firmly  
grounded <sup>348</sup>
- In knowledge say "We believe  
In the Book, the whole of it  
Is from our Lord" and none  
Will grasp the Message  
Except men of understanding

- 8 "Our Lord!" they say,  
"Let not our hearts deviate  
Now after Thou hast guided us,  
But grant us mercy  
From Thine own Presence,  
For Thou art the Grantor  
Of bounties without measure

يَسَاءُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا  
هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ٥

٤- هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ  
مِنْهُ آيَاتٌ مُحْكَمَاتٌ

هُنَّ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ وَأُخَرُ مُتَشَابِهَاتٌ  
فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ زَيْغٌ

فَيَتَّبِعُونَ مَا تَشَابَهَ

مِنْهُ ابْتِغَاءَ الْفِتْنَةِ وَابْتِغَاءَ تَأْوِيلِهِ  
وَمَا يَعْلَمُ تَأْوِيلَهُ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

وَالرَّاسِخُونَ فِي الْعِلْمِ

يَقُولُونَ آمَنَّا بِهِ

كُلٌّ مِنْ عِنْدِ رَبِّنَا

وَمَا يَذْكُرُ إِلَّا أُولُوا الْأَلْبَابِ ٥

٨- رَبَّنَا لَا تُزِغْ قُلُوبَنَا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَيْتَنَا

وَهَبْ لَنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ رَحْمَةً

إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْوَهَّابُ ٥

قوله  
الذي  
صلوات  
عليه  
وسلامه

347 This passage gives us an important clue to the interpretation of the Holy Qurān Broadly speaking it may be divided into two portions not given separately but intermingled viz (1) the nucleus or foundation of the Book literally the mother of the Book and (2) the part which is figurative metaphorical or allegorical It is very fascinating to take up the latter and exercise our ingenuity about its inner meaning but it refers to such profound spiritual matters that human language is inadequate to it and though people of wisdom may get some light from it no one should be dogmatic as the final meaning is known to God alone The Commentators usually understand the verses of established meaning (*muhkam*) to refer to the categorical orders of the *Shar'at* (or the Law) which are plain to every one's understanding But perhaps the meaning is wider the 'mother of the Book' must include the very foundation on which all Law rests the essence of God's Message, as distinguished from the various illustrative parables allegories and ordinances

If we refer to xi 1 and xxix 23 we shall find that in a sense the whole of the Qurān has both established meaning and allegorical meaning The division is not between the verses but between the meaning to be attached to them Each verse is but a Sign or Symbol what it represents is something immediately applicable and something eternal and independent of time and space—the Forms of Ideas in Plato's Philosophy The wise man will understand that there is an 'essence' and an illustrative clothing given to the essence throughout the Book We must try to understand it as best we can but not waste our energies in disputing about matters beyond our depth

348 One reading rejected by the majority of Commentators but accepted by Mujāhid and others, would not make a break at the point here marked *Waqfa Lāzim* but would run the two sentences together In that case the construction would run No one knows its hidden meanings except God and those who are firm in knowledge They say etc



- 9 " Our Lord ! Thou art He  
That will gather mankind  
Together against a Day about <sup>which</sup>  
There is no doubt , for God  
Never fails in His promise "349

٩- رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ جَامِعُ النَّاسِ  
لِيَوْمٍ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ  
إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُخْلِفُ الْوَعْدَ ۖ

## SECTION 2.

- 10 Those who reject Faith,—  
Neither their possessions  
Nor their (numerous) progeny  
Will avail them aught  
Against God they are  
But fuel for the Fire
- 11 Their resistance will be  
No better than that  
Of the people of Pharaoh,<sup>350</sup>  
And their predecessors  
They denied our Signs,  
And God called them to account  
For their sins  
For God is strict  
In punishment
- 12 Say to those who reject Faith  
" Soon will ye be vanquished "351  
And gathered together  
To Hell,—an evil couch  
Indeed (to lie on) !
- 13 " There has already been  
For you a Sign

١٠- إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَنْ تُعْنِيَ عَنْهُمْ  
أَمْوَالُهُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُهُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا  
وَأُولَئِكَ هُمْ وَقُودُ النَّارِ ۖ

١١- كَذَّابِ إِلٍ فِرْعَوْنَ  
وَالَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ  
كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا فَأَخَذَهُمُ اللَّهُ بِذُنُوبِهِمْ  
وَاللَّهُ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ۖ

١٢- قُلْ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا سَتُغْلَبُونَ  
وَتُخْشَرُونَ إِلَىٰ جَهَنَّمَ  
وَبِئْسَ الْبِهَادُ ۖ

١٣- قَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ آيَةٌ

349 This is the prayer of those who are firmly grounded in knowledge. The more they know the more they realise how little they know of all the depths of Truth in the spiritual world. But they have Faith. The glimpses they get of Truth they wish to hold fast in their heart and they pray to God to preserve them from deviating even from what light they have got. They are sure of their eventual return to God when all doubts will be solved.

350 From the beginning of the world sin, oppression, arrogance and want of Faith have gone together. The Pharaoh of the time of Moses relied upon his power, his territory, his armies and his resources to mock at Moses, the man of God, and to oppress the people of Moses. God saved the Israelites and punished their oppressors through many plagues and calamities.

351 As Moses warned the Egyptians, so the warning is here sounded to the Pagan Arabs, the Jews and the Christians, and all who resisted Faith, that their resistance would be in vain. Already the battle of Badr (referred to in the next verse) had been a warning how Faith must conquer with the help of God. The next few decades saw the Byzantine and the Persian Empires overthrown because of their arrogance and their resistance to the Law of God.

In the two armies  
That met (in combat) <sup>352</sup>  
One was fighting in the Cause  
Of God, the other  
Resisting God, these saw  
With their own eyes  
Twice their number <sup>353</sup>  
But God doth support  
With His aid whom He pleaseth  
In this is a warning  
For such as have eyes to see "

- 14 Fair in the eyes of men  
Is the love of things they covet <sup>354</sup>  
Women and sons ,  
Heaped-up hoards  
Of gold and silver , horses  
Branded (for blood and excellence) ,  
And (wealth of) cattle  
And well-tilled land  
Such are the possessions  
Of this world's life ,  
But nearness to God  
Is the best of the goals  
(To aim at)

- 15 Say Shall I give you  
Glad tidings of things  
Far better than those ?  
For the righteous are Gardens

فِي فِئَتَيْنِ التَّقَاتِ وَتُهُ تُقَاتِلُ فِي سَبِيلِ  
اللَّهِ وَأُخْرَى كَافِرَةٌ  
يُرَوْنَهُمْ مِثْلَهُمْ رَأَى الْعَيْنِ  
وَاللَّهُ يُؤْتِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ  
إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَعِبْرَةً لِّأُولِي الْأَبْصَارِ

١٣- رُبُّنَ لِلنَّاسِ حُبُّ الشَّهَوَاتِ مِنَ  
النِّسَاءِ وَالْبَنِينَ وَالْقَنَاطِيرِ الْمُقَنْطَرَةِ  
مِنَ الذَّهَبِ وَالْوُضْءِ  
وَالْخَيْلِ الْمُسَوَّمَةِ  
وَالْأَنْعَامِ وَالْحَرْثِ  
ذَلِكَ مَتَاعُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا  
وَاللَّهُ عِنْدَهُ حُسْنُ الْمَاِبِ ○

١٥- قُلْ أَوْفَيْتُكُمْ بِعَهْدِي مِنْ دَلِكُمْ  
لِلنَّاسِ اتَّقُوا عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ جَنَّاتٌ

352 This refers to the battle of Badr in Ramadhan in the second year of the Hijra. The little exiled community of Mecca Muslims with their friends in Medina had organised themselves into a God fearing community but were constantly in danger of being attacked by their Pagan enemies of Mecca in alliance with some of the disaffected elements (Jews and Hypocrites) in or near Medina itself. The design of the Meccans was to gather all the resources they could and with an overwhelming force to crush and annihilate Muhammad and his party. To this end Abū Sufyān was leading a richly laden caravan from Syria to Mecca. He called for armed aid from Mecca. The battle was fought in the plain of Badr about 50 miles south west of Medina. The Muslim force consisted of only about 313 men mostly unarmed but they were led by Muhammad and they were fighting for their Faith. The Meccan army well armed and well equipped numbered over a thousand and had among its leaders some of the most experienced warriors of Arabia including Abū Jahl the inveterate foe and persecutor of Islam. Against all odds the Muslims won a brilliant victory and many of the enemy leaders including Abu Jahl were killed.

353 It was impossible without the miraculous aid of God for such a small and ill equipped force as was the Muslim band to defeat the large and well found force of the enemy. But their firmness, zeal and discipline won them divine aid. Enemy prisoners stated that the enemy ranks saw the Muslim force to be many times larger than it was.

354 The pleasures of this world are first enumerated: women for love, sons for strength and pride, hoarded riches which procure all luxuries, the best and finest pedigree horses, cattle, the measure of wealth in the ancient world as well as the means and symbols of good farming in the modern world and broad acres of well tilled land. By analogy we may include for our mechanized age machines of all kinds—tractors, motor-cars, aeroplanes, the best internal combustion engines, etc etc. In 'heaped up hoards of gold and silver' the Arabic word translated *hoards* is *qanāṭir* plural of *qunṭār* which literally means a Talent of 1200 ounces of gold. That quantity of pure gold would coin into 5097 sterling gold Sovereigns each containing 123.274 grains of gold, 22 carats fine. These at present prices (say Rs 20 to the sovereign) would be worth more than a lakh of rupees. Heaped hoards of *qanāṭir* would therefore be boundless wealth as wish can claim.

In nearness to their Lord,  
With rivers flowing beneath,  
Therein is their eternal home,  
With Companions pure (and  
holy), <sup>355</sup>  
And the good pleasure of God  
For in God's sight  
Are (all) His servants,—

16. Namely, those who say  
"Our Lord ! we have indeed  
Believed forgive us, then,  
Our sins, and save us  
From the agony of the Fire,"—

- 17 Those who show patience,  
Firmness and self-control, <sup>356</sup>  
Who are true (in word and deed),  
Who worship devoutly,  
Who spend (in the way of God),  
And who pray for forgiveness  
In the early hours of the  
morning <sup>357</sup>

- 18 There is no god but He  
That is the witness of God,  
His angels, and those endued  
With knowledge, standing firm <sup>358</sup>  
On justice There is no god but He,  
The Exalted, the Wise

- 19 The Religion before God  
Is Islam (submission to His Will)  
Nor did the People of the Book  
Dissent therefrom except

تَحْرِيٍّ مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ  
حُلْدَانٍ فِيهَا وَأَرْوَاجٌ مُطَهَّرَةٌ  
وَرِضْوَانٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ  
وَاللَّهُ نَصِيرٌ بِالْعِبَادِ

١٦- الَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا  
إِنَّمَا أَمْنَا وَأَغْوَيْنَا وَدُونَنَا  
وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ

١٧- الصَّابِرِينَ وَالصَّادِقِينَ  
وَالْقَنَاتِينَ وَالْمُتَّقِينَ  
وَالْمُسْتَغْفِرِينَ بِالسَّحَرِ

١٨- شَهِدَ اللَّهُ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ  
وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ وَأُولُو الْعِلْمِ فَأِيسًا بِالْقِسْطِ  
لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ

١٩- إِنَّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ  
وَمَا اخْتَلَفَ الَّذِينَ أُنْتُوا إِلَيْهِ

355 Cf II 25 and note

356 *Ṣabr* (*Ṣābirin*) includes many shades of meaning I have specified three here viz, patience, firmness, and self control See II 45 and II 153 and notes thereon

357 True servants of God are described in vv 16 and 17 They have faith humility, and hope (v 16) and they have certain virtues (v 17) viz (1) patience steadfastness self restraint and all that goes under the full definition of *ṣabr* this shows a certain attitude of mind (2) in all their dealings they are true and sincere as they are also in their promises and words this marks them out in social conduct (3) further their spiritual worship is earnest and deep an inner counterpart of their outward conduct, (4) their worship of God shows itself in their love of their fellow men for they are ready and liberal in charity and (5) their self discipline is so great that the first thing they do every morning is humbly to approach their God

358 God Himself speaks to us through His revelations (through angels) and through His Creation for all Nature glorifies God No thinking mind, if it only judges the matter fairly can fail to find the same witness in his own heart and conscience All this points to the Unity of God His exalted nature, and His wisdom

Through envy of each other,<sup>359</sup>  
 After knowledge had come to them  
 But if they deny the Signs of God,  
 God is swift in calling to account

إِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَهُمُ الْعِلْمُ بِنِجَاتِهِمْ وَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ

- 20 So if they dispute with thee,  
 Say "I have submitted  
 My whole self<sup>360</sup> to God  
 And so have those  
 Who follow me"  
 And say to the People of the Book  
 And to those who are unlearned<sup>361</sup>  
 "Do ye (also) submit yourselves?"  
 If they do, they are in right  
 guidance,  
 But if they turn back,  
 Thy duty is to preach the Message,  
 And in God's sight  
 Are (all) His servants<sup>362</sup>

۲۰- فَإِنْ حَاجُّوكَ فَقُلْ أَسْلَمْتُ وَجْهِيَ لِلَّهِ وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَنِ وَقُلْ لِلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ وَالْأُمِّيِّينَ أَسْلَمْتُمْ فَإِنْ أَسْلَمُوا فَقَدِ اهْتَدَوْا وَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّمَا عَلَيْكَ الْبَلَاءُ وَاللَّهُ نَصِيرٌ بِالْعِبَادِ ؕ

C 55 —If the People who received  
 (III 21 30) Earlier revelations confine themselves  
 To partial truths, and in their pride  
 Shut their eyes to the whole of the Book  
 Of God, their day is done  
 Let the Muslims seek the society  
 And friendship of their own, and trust  
 In God, who knows all, and holds  
 Every soul responsible for its own deeds

### SECTION 3

- 21 As to those who deny  
 The Signs of God, and in defiance

۲۱- إِنَّا الَّذِينَ نَكْفُرُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ

<sup>359</sup> *Bagyan* through envy through selfish contumacy or obstinacy through sheer contrary mindedness or desire to resist or rebel Cf II 90 and II 213

<sup>360</sup> *Wajh* whole self See note to II 112

<sup>361</sup> The People of the Book may be supposed to know something about the previous religious history of mankind. To them the appeal should be easy and intelligible as all Religion is one and it is only being renewed in Islam. But the appeal is also made to the Pagan Arabs who are unlearned and who can well be expected to follow the example of one of their own who received divine enlightenment and was able to bring new knowledge to them. A great many of both these classes did so. But the few who resisted God's grace and actually threatened and persecuted those who believed, are told that God will look after His own.

<sup>362</sup> Note the literary skill in the argument as it proceeds. The mystery of birth faintly suggests that we are coming to the story of Jesus. The exposition of the Book suggests that Islam is the same religion as that of the People of the Book. Next we are told that the People of the Book made their religion one-sided and through the priesthood of the family of Imrān we are brought to the story of Jesus who was rejected by a body of the Jews as Muhammad was rejected by a body of both Jews and Christians.

Of right, <sup>363</sup> slay the prophets,  
And slay those who teach  
Just dealing with mankind, <sup>364</sup>  
Announce to them a grievous

penalty

- 22 They are those whose works  
Will bear no fruit <sup>365</sup>  
In this world  
And in the Hereafter,  
Nor will they have  
Any one to help

- 23 Hast thou not turned  
Thy vision to those  
Who have been given a portion <sup>366</sup>  
Of the Book? They are  
Invited to the Book of God,  
To settle their dispute,  
But a party of them  
Turn back and decline  
(The arbitration) <sup>367</sup>

- 24 This because they say  
"The Fire shall not touch us  
But for a few numbered days" <sup>368</sup>  
For their forgeries deceive them  
As to their own religion

- 25 But how (will they fare)  
When We gather them together

وَيَقْتُلُونَ النَّبِيِّينَ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ وَيَقْتُلُونَ  
الَّذِينَ بَايَعُوا بِالْقِسْطِ مِنَ النَّاسِ ۚ  
فَنَبِّئْهُمْ بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ۝  
۲۲ أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ حَبِطَتْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ  
فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ  
وَمَا لَهُمْ مِنْ نَاصِرِينَ ۝

۲۳ أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا نَصِيبًا مِّنَ  
الْكِتَابِ يُدْعَوْنَ إِلَى كِتَابِ اللَّهِ  
لِيَحْكُمَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ يَتَوَلَّى فُرُوقُهُمْ  
وَهُمْ مُّعْرِضُونَ ۝

۲۴ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا لَنْ تَمَسَّنَا النَّارُ  
إِلَّا أَيَّامًا مَّعْدُودَاتٍ ۚ  
وَعَرَّضُوا فِي دِينِهِمْ مَا كَانُوا يَفْتَرُونَ ۝  
۲۵ فَكَيْفَ إِذَا حُصِّلْتُمْ

<sup>363</sup> *Right! haqq* has many shades of meaning (1) right in the sense of having a right to something (2) right in the sense of straight conduct as opposed to wrong (3) truth (4) justice All these shades are implied here

<sup>364</sup> Examples of the Prophets slain were the righteous blood shed upon the earth from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias whom ye slew between the temple and the altar Matt xxiii 35 (cf Q ii 61) and second note Again John the Baptist (Yahya) noble chaste a prophet of the goodly company of the righteous Q iii 39) was bound imprisoned and beheaded and his head presented to a dancing harlot Matt xiv 11 An example of a just man in another nation who taught righteousness and was put to death was Socrates the Greek philosopher

<sup>365</sup> Cf ii 217 end

<sup>366</sup> *A portion of the Book* I conceive that God's revelation as a whole throughout the ages is The Book The Law of Moses and the Gospel of Jesus were portions of the Book The Quran completes the revelation and is *par excellence* the Book of God

<sup>367</sup> The Commentators mention a particular incident when a dispute was submitted by the Jews for arbitration to the Holy Apostle He appealed to the authority of their own books but they tried to conceal and prevaricate The general lesson is that the People of the Book should have been the first to welcome in Muhammad the living exponent of the Message of God as a whole and some of them did so but others turned away from guilty arrogance, relying on corrupted texts and doctrines forged out of their own fancies, though they were not conformable to reason and good sense

<sup>368</sup> Cf Q ii 80

Against a Day about which  
There is no doubt,  
And each soul will be paid out  
Just what it has earned,  
Without (favour or) injustice ?

- 26 Say "Oh God!  
Lord of Power (and Rule)  
Thou givest Power  
To whom Thou pleasest,  
And Thou strippest off Power  
From whom Thou pleasest  
Thou enduest with honour  
Whom Thou pleasest,  
And Thou bringest low  
Whom Thou pleasest  
In Thy hand is all Good <sup>369</sup>  
Over all things  
Thou hast power

- 27 "Thou causest the Night  
To gain on the Day,  
And Thou causest the Day  
To gain on the Night, <sup>370</sup>  
Thou bringest the Living  
Out of the Dead,  
And Thou bringest the Dead  
Out of the Living, <sup>371</sup>  
And Thou givest sustenance  
To whom Thou pleasest,  
Without measure <sup>372</sup>

- 28 **Interpret** not the Believers  
Take for friends or helpers

لِيَوْمٍ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ  
وَوُفِّيَتْ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا كَسَبَتْ  
وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ○

٢٦- قُلِ اللَّهُمَّ مَلِكُ الْمُلُوكِ  
تُوَفِّي الْمُلُوكَ مَن تَشَاءُ  
وَتَنْزِعُ الْمُلُوكَ مِمَّن تَشَاءُ  
وَتُعِزُّ مَن تَشَاءُ  
وَتُذِلُّ مَن تَشَاءُ  
بِيَدِكَ الْخَيْرُ  
إِنَّكَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ○

٢٧- تُولِجُ اللَّيْلَ فِي النَّهَارِ  
وَتُولِجُ النَّهَارَ فِي اللَّيْلِ  
وَتُخْرِجُ الْحَيَّ مِنَ الْمَيِّتِ  
وَتُخْرِجُ الْمَيِّتَ مِنَ الْحَيِّ  
وَتَرْزُقُ مَن تَشَاءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ○

٢٨- لَا يَتَّخِذِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الْكَافِرِينَ أَوْلِيَاءَ

369 Another glorious passage full of meaning both obvious and mystic The governing phrase in it all is 'In Thy hand is all Good' What is the standard by which we may judge Good? It is God's Will Therefore when we submit to God's Will and real Islam illuminates us we see the highest Good There has been and is much controversy as to what is the Highest Good To the Muslim there is no difficulty it is the Will of God He must ever strive to learn and understand that Will But once in that fortress he is secure He is not troubled with the nature of Evil Evil is the negation of God's Will Good is conformity to God's Will He does not cry with impatience against many things which give him pain and sorrow He knows that 'God is in His world' and that God is Good God's Will is another name for God's Plan There is nothing arbitrary or haphazard We do not see the whole Plan or Will But we have Faith All is will be must be right in the end

370 True in many senses In every twenty four hours night merges into day and day into night and there is no clear boundary between them In every solar year the night gains on the day after the summer solstice and the day gains on the night after the winter solstice But further, if light and darkness are viewed as symbols of (a) knowledge and ignorance, (b) happiness and misery (c) spiritual insight and spiritual blindness God's Plan or Will works here too as in the physical world and in His hand is all Good

371 We can interpret Dead and Living in even more senses than Day and Night death physical, intellectual, emotional, spiritual Life and Death may also apply to collective group or national life And who has ever solved the mystery of Life? But Faith refers it to God's Will and Plan

372 Again true in all the senses suggested in the two previous notes The only true Reality is God All else has its basis and sustenance in Him Lest our little minds create fear out of 'nicely calculated less or more', we are told at once that God's bounty is without measure or account

Unbelievers rather than  
Believers if ye do that,  
In nothing will there be help  
From God except by way  
Of precaution, that ye may  
Guard yourselves from them <sup>373</sup>  
But God cautions you  
(To remember) Himself,  
For the final goal  
Is to God

- 29 Say " Whether ye hide  
What is in your hearts  
Or reveal it,  
God knows it all  
He knows what is  
In the heavens,  
And what is on earth  
And God has power  
Over all things

- 30 " On the Day when every soul  
Will be confronted  
With all the good it has done,  
And all the evil it has done,  
It will wish there were  
A great distance  
Between it and its evil  
But God cautions you  
(To remember) Himself  
And God is full of kindness  
To those that serve Him "

مِنْ دُونِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ  
وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ فليْسَ مِنَ اللَّهِ فِي  
شَيْءٍ إِلَّا أَنْ تَتَّقُوا مِنْهُمْ تُقَاتُ  
وَيُحَذِّرُكُمُ اللَّهُ نَفْسَهُ  
وَإِلَى اللَّهِ الْمَصِيرُ

٢٩- قُلْ إِنْ تُحِبُّوا مَا فِي صُدُورِكُمْ  
أَوْ تُبْذَرُوهُ يَعْلَمُهُ اللَّهُ  
وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ  
وَاللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

٣- يَوْمَ تَجِدُ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ  
مَّا عَمِلَتْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ مُخَضَّرًا  
وَمَّا عَمِلَتْ مِنْ سُوءٍ  
تَوَدُّ لَوْ أَنَّ بَيْنَهَا وَيَسَاءَ أَمَدًا بَعِيدًا  
وَيُحَذِّرُكُمُ اللَّهُ نَفْسَهُ  
وَاللَّهُ رَءُوفٌ بِالْعَاصِينَ

سَائِدَةً  
لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ  
ع

- C 56 — God's truth is continuous, and His Apostles  
(III 31 63) From Adam, through Noah and Abraham,  
Down to the last of the Prophets, Muhammad,  
Form one brotherhood Of the progeny  
Of 'Imrān, father of Moses and Aaron,  
Sprang a woman, who devoted  
Her unborn offspring to God  
The child was Mary the mother of Jesus  
Her cousin was the wife of the priest  
Zakariya, who took charge of Mary

373 If Faith is a fundamental matter in our lives our associations and friendships will naturally be with those who share our Faith. Evil communications corrupt good manners and evil company may corrupt Faith. In our ordinary every day affairs of business we are asked to seek the help of Believers rather than Unbelievers. Only in this way can our community be strong in organisation and unity. But where there is no question of preference or where in self defence we have to take the assistance of those not belonging to our Faith that is permissible. In any case we must not weaken our Brotherhood we must try to make it stronger if possible.

To Zakariya, in his old age, was born  
 A son Yahyā, amid prodigies  
 Yahyā was the herald of Jesus  
 The son of Mary, and was known  
 As John the Baptist Jesus  
 Was of virgin birth,  
 And performed many miracles  
 But those to whom he came as Prophet  
 Rejected him, and plotted for his death  
 Their plots failed, for God's Plan  
 Is above man's plots So will it be  
 With Islam, the Truth from all eternity

## SECTION 4

31 Say "If ye do love God,  
 Follow me God will love you  
 And forgive you your sins  
 For God is Oft-Forgiving,  
 Most Merciful"

32 Say "Obey God  
 And His Apostle"  
 But if they turn back,  
 God loveth not those  
 Who reject Faith

33 God did choose  
 Adam and Noah, the family  
 Of Abraham, and the family  
 Of 'Imrān above all people,—

34 Offspring, one of the other <sup>374</sup>  
 And God heareth  
 And knoweth all things

35 Behold! a woman of 'Imrān <sup>375</sup>  
 Said "Oh my Lord! I do

٣١- قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ  
 فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ  
 وَغُفِّرَ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

٣٢- قُلْ أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ  
 فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا  
 فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْكَافِرِينَ

٣٣- إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَىٰ آدَمَ وَنُوحًا وَآلَ  
 إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَآلَ عِمْرَانَ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ

٣٤- ذُرِّيَّةً بَعْضُهَا مِنْ بَعْضٍ  
 وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ

٣٥- إِذْ قَالَتِ امْرَأَتُ عِمْرَانَ رَبِّ إِنِّي

374 The Prophets in the Jewish Christian Muslim Dispensation form one family literally. But the argument is wider. All men of God form spiritually one family. If you love and obey God love and obey His Messenger who is actually present with you (in the flesh or in his teaching). Your love obedience and discipline will be the test of your Faith.

375 Now we begin the story of Jesus. As a prelude we have the birth of Mary and the parallel story of John the Baptist Yahyā the son of Zakariya. Yahyā's mother Elisabeth was a cousin of Mary the mother of Jesus (Luke 1:36), and therefore John and Jesus were cousins by blood and there was a spiritual cousinhood in their birth and career. Elisabeth was of the daughters of Aaron (Luke 1:5) of a priestly family which went back to Aaron the brother of Moses and son of Imrān. Her husband Zakariya was actually a priest and her cousin Mary was presumably also of a priestly family. By tradition Mary's mother was called Hannah (in Latin Anna and in English Anne), and her father was called Imrān. Hannah is therefore both a descendant of the priestly house of Imrān and the wife of Imrān,— 'a woman of Imrān' in a double sense.



Dedicate unto Thee  
What is in my womb  
For Thy special service <sup>376</sup>  
So accept this of me  
For Thou hearest  
And knowest all things "

- 36 When she was delivered,  
She said, "Oh my Lord !  
Behold ! I am delivered  
Of a female child !"—  
And God knew best  
What she brought forth—<sup>377</sup>  
"And nowise is the male  
Like the female <sup>378</sup>  
I have named her Mary,  
And I commend her  
And her offspring  
To Thy protection  
From the Evil One,  
The Rejected "

- 37 Right graciously  
Did her Lord accept her  
He made her grow  
In purity and beauty  
To the care of Zakariya  
Was she assigned  
Every time that he entered  
(Her) chamber to see her,  
He found her supplied  
With sustenance He said  
"Oh Mary ! Whence (comes) this  
To you ?" She said  
"From God for God  
Provides sustenance  
To whom He pleases,  
Without measure " <sup>379</sup>

لَذَرْتُكَ مَا فِي بَطْنِي مُحَرَّرًا  
فَتَقَبَّلَ مِنِّي  
إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ○

٣٦- فَلَمَّا وَضَعَتْهَا قَالَتْ رَبِّ إِنِّي وَضَعْتُهَا  
أُنْثَىٰ  
وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا وَضَعَتْ  
وَلَيْسَ الذَّكَرُ كَالْأُنْثَىٰ  
وَإِنِّي سَمَّيْتُهَا مَرْيَمَ  
وَإِنِّي أُعِيذُهَا بِكَ  
وَذُرِّيَّتَهُمَا مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ ○

٣٧- فَتَقَبَّلَهَا رَبُّهَا بِقَبُولٍ حَسَنٍ  
وَأَنبَتَهَا نَبَاتًا حَسَنًا وَكَفَّلَهَا زَكَرِيَّا  
كُلَّمَا دَخَلَ عَلَيْهَا زَكَرِيَّا الْمِحْرَابَ  
وَجَدَ عِنْدَهَا رِزْقًا  
قَالَ يَرْيِمُ أَنَّىٰ لَكَ هَٰذَا  
قَالَتْ هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ  
إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَرْزُقُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ  
بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ○

376 Muḥarrar—freed from all worldly affairs and specially dedicated to God's service. She expected a son who was to be a special devotee a miraculous son of the old age of his parents but God gave her instead a daughter. But that daughter was Mary the mother of Jesus the chosen one among the women III 42

377 The mother of Mary expected a male child. Was she disappointed that it was a female child? No for she had Faith and she knew that God's Plan was better than any wishes of hers. Mary was no ordinary girl only God knew what it was that her mother brought forth.

378 The female child could not be devoted to Temple service under the Mosaic law as she intended. But she was marked out for a special destiny as a miracle child, to be the mother of the miracle child Jesus. She was content to seek God's protection for her against all evil. There is a certain sense of pride in the girl on the part of the mother.

379 Mary grew under God's special protection. Her sustenance under which we may include both her physical needs and her spiritual food came from God and her growth was indeed a "goodly growth" which I have tried to express in the Text by the words "purity and beauty." Some apocryphal Christian writings say that she was brought up in the Temple to the age of twelve like a dove, and that she was fed by angels.

- 38 Where did Zakariya  
Pray to his Lord, saying  
"Oh my Lord! Grant unto me  
From Thee a progeny  
That is pure for Thou  
Art He that heareth prayer!"<sup>380</sup>

٣٨- هُنَالِكَ دَعَا زَكَرِيَّا رَبَّهُ قَالَ رَبِّ هَبْ  
لِي مِنْ لَدُنْكَ ذُرِّيَّةً طَيِّبَةً  
إِنَّكَ سَمِيعُ الدُّعَاءِ ○

- 39 While he was standing  
In prayer in the chamber,  
The angels called unto him  
"God doth give thee  
Glad tidings of Yahya,  
Who would testify to the truth  
Of a Word from God,<sup>381</sup> and (be  
Besides) noble, chaste,  
And a Prophet,—  
Of the (goodly) company  
Of the righteous"

٣٩- فَنَادَتْهُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ  
وَهُوَ قَائِمٌ يُصَلِّي فِي الْمِحْرَابِ  
أَنَّ اللَّهَ يُبَشِّرُكَ بِيَحْيَى  
مُصَدِّقًا بِكَلِمَةٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ  
وَسَيِّدًا وَحَصُورًا  
وَنَبِيًّا مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ ○

- 40 He said "Oh my Lord!  
How shall I have a son,  
Seeing I am very old,  
And my wife is barren?"  
"Thus," was the answer,  
"Doth God accomplish  
What He willeth"

٤٠- قَالَ رَبِّ أَنَّى يَكُونُ لِي غُلَامٌ  
وَقَدْ بَلَغَنِيَ الْكِبَرُ  
وَأَمْرَاتِي عَاقِرٌ  
قَالَ كَذَلِكَ اللَّهُ يَفْعَلُ مَا يَشَاءُ ○

- 41 He said "Oh my Lord!  
Give me a Sign!"  
"Thy Sign," was the answer,  
"Shall be that thou  
Shalt speak to no man  
For three days  
But with signals  
Then celebrate  
The praises of thy Lord  
Again and again,  
And glorify Him  
In the evening  
And in the morning"

٤١- قَالَ رَبِّ اجْعَلْ لِي آيَةً  
قَالَ إِنِّنْكَ إِلَّا تَكَلِّمُ النَّاسَ  
ثَلَاثَةَ أَيَّامٍ  
إِلَّا رَمْرًا  
وَاذْكُرْ رَبَّكَ كَثِيرًا  
وَسَبِّحْ بِالْعَشِيِّ وَالْإِبْكَارِ ○

380 The birth of Mary, the mystic mother of Jesus, of John the Baptist, the precursor of Jesus and of Jesus the mystic prophet of Israel whom Israel rejected, occurred in that order chronologically, and are told in that order. They are all inter connected. Zakariya prayed for no ordinary son. He and his wife were past the age of parenthood. Seeing the growth of the mystic girl Mary he prayed for some mystic child from God,— from Thee a progeny that is pure. Perhaps he had adoption in his mind. Did he want to adopt Mary? To his surprise, he is given a son in the flesh ushered in by a mystic Sign.

381 Notice a Word from God not the Word of God, the epithet that mystical Christianity uses for Jesus. As stated in v 59 below Jesus was created by a miracle, by God's word Be, and he was

## SECTION 5

- 42 Behold! the angels said  
 "Oh Mary! God hath chosen thee  
 And purified thee—chosen thee  
 Above the women of all nations <sup>382</sup>

- 43 "Oh Mary! worship  
 Thy Lord devoutly  
 Prostrate thyself,  
 And bow down (in prayer)  
 With those who bow down "

- 44 This is part of the tidings  
 Of the things unseen, <sup>383</sup>  
 Which We reveal unto thee  
 (Oh Apostle!) by inspiration  
 Thou wast not with them  
 When they cast lots  
 With arrows, <sup>384</sup> as to which  
 Of them should be charged  
 With the care of Mary  
 Nor wast thou with them  
 When they disputed (the point) <sup>385</sup>

- 45 Behold! the angels said  
 "Oh Mary! God giveth thee  
 Glad tidings of a Word  
 From Him his name  
 Will be Christ Jesus, <sup>386</sup>  
 The son of Mary, held in honour  
 In this world and the Hereafter  
 And of (the company of) those  
 Nearest to God, <sup>387</sup>

٢٢- وَإِذْ قَالَتِ الْمَلَكَةُ يَسْرُمُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ  
 اصْطَفَاكِ وَطَهَّرَكِ وَاصْطَفَاكِ عَلَى سَائِرِ  
 الْعَالَمِينَ ○

٢٣- يَسْرُمُ أَفَتُنَبِّئُ لِرَبِّكِ وَاسْجُدِي  
 وَارْكَعِي مَعَ الرَّاكِعِينَ ○

٢٤- ذَلِكَ مِنْ أَنْبَاءِ الْغَيْبِ  
 نُوحِيهِ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا كُنْتَ لَدَيْهِمْ  
 إِذْ يَقُولُونَ أَقْلَامُهُمْ  
 الْكُفُّ نَكَلُ مَرْيَمَ  
 وَمَا كُنْتَ لَدَيْهِمْ  
 إِذْ يَخْتَصِمُونَ ○

٢٥- إِذْ قَالَتِ الْمَلَكَةُ يَسْرُمُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ  
 يُكْشِرُكِ بِكَلِمَةٍ مِنْهُ ۖ  
 اسْمُهُ الْمَسِيحُ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ  
 وَحِيهَا فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ  
 وَمِنَ الْمُقَرَّبِينَ ○

382 Mary the mother of Jesus was unique in that she gave birth to a son by a special miracle without the intervention of the customary physical means. This of course does not mean that she was more than human any more than that her son was more than human. She had as much need to pray to God as anyone else. The Christian dogma in all sects except the Unitarian holds that Jesus was God and the son of God. The worship of Mary became the practice in the Roman Catholic Church which calls Mary the Mother of God. This seems to have been endorsed by the Council of Ephesus in 431, in the century before Muḥammad was born to sweep away the corruptions of the Church of Christ. For *ālamīn* as meaning all nations see III 96 n 423.

383 *Things unseen* mystic spiritual. The whole story has a mystic meaning and it would be unseemly to dispute or speculate about it.

384 Literally *reeds aqlam*. For the Arab custom of casting lots with arrows see II 219, second note.

385 Christian apocryphal writings mention the contention between the priests as to the honour of taking charge of Mary and how it was decided by means of rods or reeds in favour of Zakariya.

386 *Christ* Greek, *Christos*—anointed kings and priests were anointed to symbolise consecration to their office. The Hebrew and Arabic form is *Masīḥ*.

387 Nearest to God *Muqarrabīn*, Cf Q lvi 11.

46 " He shall speak to the people  
In childhood and in maturity <sup>388</sup>  
And he shall be (of the company)  
Of the righteous "

47 She said " Oh my Lord ! <sup>389</sup>  
How shall I have a son  
When no man hath touched me ? "  
He said " Even so  
God createth  
What He willeth  
When He hath decreed  
A Plan, He but saith  
To it, ' Be, ' and it is !

48 " And God will teach him  
The Book and Wisdom,  
The Law and the Gospel,

49 " And (appoint him)  
An apostle to the Children  
Of Israel, (with this message)  
" ' I have come to you,  
With a Sign from your Lord,  
In that I make for you  
Out of clay, as it were,  
The figure of a bird,  
And breathe into it,  
And it becomes a bird  
By God's leave <sup>390</sup>  
And I heal those  
Born blind, and the lepers,  
And I quicken the dead,  
By God's leave ,  
And I declare to you  
What ye eat, and what ye store <sup>391</sup>  
In your houses Surely  
Therein is a Sign for you  
If ye did believe ,

٣٦- وَيَكْلِمُ النَّاسَ فِي الْمَهْلِ وَكَهْلًا  
وَمِنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ ٥

٣٧- قَالَتْ رَبِّ أَنَّى يَكُونُ لِي وَلَدٌ  
وَلَمْ يَمَسِّنِي سَرُورٌ  
قَالَ كَذَلِكَ اللَّهُ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ  
إِذَا قَضَىٰ أَمْرًا  
فَأَنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ ٥

٣٨- وَيُعَلِّمُهُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ  
وَالتَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ ٥

٣٩- وَرَسُولًا إِلَىٰ بَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ  
أَنِّي قَدْ جِئْتُكُمْ بِآيَةٍ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ  
أَنِّي أَخْلُقُ لَكُمْ مِنَ الطِّينِ كَهَيْئَةِ الطَّيْرِ  
فَأَنْفُخُ فِيهِ فَيَكُونُ طَيْرًا  
بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ  
وَأُبْرِئُ الْأَكْمَةَ وَالْأَبْرَصَ  
وَأُحْيِي الْمَوْتَىٰ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ  
وَأُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا تَأْكُلُونَ وَمَا تَدْخِرُونَ  
فِي بُيُوتِكُمْ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً لِّكُمُ إِن  
كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ ٥

<sup>388</sup> The ministry of Jesus lasted only about three years from 30 to 33 years of his age when in the eyes of his enemies he was crucified. But the Gospel of Luke (ii 46) describes him as disputing with the doctors in the Temple at the age of 12 and even earlier as a child he was strong in spirit filled with wisdom (Luke ii 40). Some apocryphal Gospels describe him as preaching from infancy.

<sup>389</sup> She was addressed by angels who gave her God's message. In reply she speaks as to God. In reply apparently an angel again gives God's message.

<sup>390</sup> This miracle of the clay birds is found in some of the apocryphal Gospels those of curing the blind and the lepers and raising the dead are in the canonical Gospels. The original Gospel (see v 48) was not the various stories written afterwards by disciples but the real Message taught direct by Jesus.

<sup>391</sup> I do not know whether this clause refers to a particular incident, or generally to a prophetic knowledge of what is not known to ordinary people.

50 " (I have come to you),  
To attest the Law  
Which was before me  
And to make lawful  
To you part of what was  
(Before) forbidden to you,  
I have come to you  
With a Sign from your Lord  
So fear God,  
And obey me

51 " It is God  
Who is my Lord  
And your Lord,  
Then worship Him  
This is a Way  
That is straight "

52. When Jesus found  
Unbelief on their part  
He said " Who will be  
My helpers to (the work  
Of) God ? " Said the Disciples  
" We are God's helpers  
We believe in God,  
And do thou bear witness  
That we are Muslims <sup>392</sup>

53. " Our Lord ! we believe  
In what Thou hast revealed,  
And we follow the Apostle,  
Then write us down  
Among those who bear witness "

54 And (the unbelievers)  
Plotted and planned,  
And God too planned, <sup>393</sup>  
And the best of planners  
Is God

٥٠- وَ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا  
بَيْنَ يَدَيَّ مِنَ التَّوْرَةِ  
وَلِأَجْلِ لَكُمْ بَعْضُ الَّذِي  
سُحِّرَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَجِئْتُكُمْ بِآيَةٍ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ  
فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا

٥١- إِنَّ اللَّهَ رَبِّي  
وَرَبُّكُمْ فَاعْبُدُوهُ  
هَذَا صِرَاطٌ مُسْتَقِيمٌ

٥٢- فَلَمَّا أَحَسَّ عِيسَى مِنْهُمُ الْكُفْرَ  
قَالَ مَنْ أَنْصَارِي إِلَى اللَّهِ  
قَالَ الْحَوَارِيُّونَ نَحْنُ أَنْصَارُ اللَّهِ  
أَمَّا يَا لَئِي  
وَالشَّهَدَ بِآيَاتِنَا مُسْلِمُونَ

٥٣- رَبَّنَا آمَنَّا بِمَا أَنْزَلْتَ  
وَاتَّبَعْنَا الرَّسُولَ  
فَاكْتُبْنَا مَعَ الشَّاهِدِينَ

٥٤- وَمَكُرُّوْا وَمَكَرَ اللَّهُ  
وَاللَّهُ خَيْرُ الْمَكْرِيْنَ

<sup>392</sup> The story of Jesus is told with special application to the time of the Apostle Muhammad. Note the word helpers (Anṣār) in this connection and the reference to plotters in v 54. It was the one Religion—the Religion of God which was in essence the religion of Abraham, Moses and Jesus. The argument runs: why do ye then now make divisions and reject the living Teacher? Islam is bowing to the Will of God. All who have faith should bow to the Will of God and be Muslims.

<sup>393</sup> The Arabic *makara* has both a bad and a good meaning that of making an intricate plan to carry out some secret purpose. The enemies of God are constantly doing that. But God—in whose hands is all good—has His plans also, against which the evil ones will have no chance whatever.



59 The similitude of Jesus  
Before God is as that of Adam, <sup>398</sup>  
He created him from dust,  
Then said to him "Be"  
And he was

٥٩- إِنْ مَثَلُ عِيسَى عِنْدَ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ آدَمَ  
خَلَقَهُ مِنْ تُرَابٍ  
ثُمَّ قَالَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ ○

60 The Truth (comes)  
From God alone,  
So be not of those  
Who doubt <sup>399</sup>

٦٠- الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكَ  
○ فَلَا تَكُنْ مِنَ الْمُتَرَدِّينَ

61 If any one disputes  
In this matter with thee,  
Now after (full) knowledge  
Hath come to thee,  
Say "Come! let us  
Gather together,—  
Our sons and your sons,  
Our women and your women,  
Ourselves and yourselves  
Then let us earnestly pray,  
And invoke the curse  
Of God on those who lie!" <sup>400</sup>

٦١- فَمَنْ حَاجَّكَ فِيهِ  
مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ فَقُلْ تَعَالَوْا  
نَدْعُ أَبْنَاءَنَا وَأَبْنَاءَكُمْ  
وَنِسَاءَنَا وَنِسَاءَكُمْ وَأَنْفُسَنَا وَأَنْفُسَكُمْ  
ثُمَّ نَبْتَهِلْ فَنَجْعَلْ  
لَعْنَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَى الْكَاذِبِينَ ○

62 This is the true account <sup>401</sup>  
There is no god  
Except God,  
And God—He is

٦٢- إِنْ هَذَا لَهُوَ الْقَصَصُ الْحَقُّ  
وَمَا مِنْ إِلَهٍ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَهُوَ

398 After a description of the high position which Jesus occupies as a prophet we have a repudiation of the dogma that he was God or the Son of God or anything more than a man. If it is said that he was born without a human father Adam was also so born. Indeed Adam was born without either a human father or mother. As far as our physical bodies are concerned they are mere dust. In God's sight Jesus was as dust just as Adam was or humanity is. The greatness of Jesus arose from the divine command "Be" for after that he was—more than dust—a great spiritual leader and teacher.

399 The truth does not necessarily come from priests or from the superstitions of whole peoples. It comes from God, and where there is a direct revelation there is no room for doubt.

400 In the year of Delegations 10th of the Hijra came a Christian embassy from Najrān (towards Yaman about 150 miles north of Ṣanaʿā). They were much impressed on hearing this passage of the Qurān explaining the true position of Christ and they entered into tributary relations with the new Muslim State. But ingrained habits and customs prevented them from accepting Islam as a body. The Holy Apostle firm in his faith proposed a *Mubahala* i.e. a solemn meeting in which both sides should summon not only their men but their women and children earnestly pray to God and invoke the curse of God on those who should lie. Those who had a pure and sincere faith would not hesitate. The Christians declined and they were dismissed in a spirit of tolerance with a promise of protection from the State in return for tribute, the wages of rule as it is called in the *Āin* i. *Akhbār*.

401 We are now in a position to deal with the questions which we left over at 11 87. Jesus is no more than a man. It is against reason and revelation to call him God or the Son of God. He is called the son of Mary to emphasize this. He had no known human father as his birth was miraculous. But it is not this which raises him to his high spiritual position as a prophet but because God called him to his office. The praise is due to God Who by His word gave him spiritual strength—strengthened him with the holy spirit. The miracles which surround his story relate not only to his birth and his life and death but also to his mother Mary and his precursor Yahyā. These were the 'Clear Signs' which he brought. It was those who misunderstood him who obscured his clear Signs and surrounded him with mysteries of their own invention.

The Exalted,  
The Wise

الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ٥

- 63 But if they turn back,  
God hath full knowledge  
Of those who do mischief

۶۳- فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا  
فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ بِالْمُفْسِدِينَ ٥

C 57 Islam doth invite all people  
(iii 64 120) To the Truth there is no cause  
For dissembling or disputing  
False are the people who corrupt  
God's truth, or hinder men  
From coming to God Let the Muslims  
Hold together in unity and discipline,  
Knowing that they have a mission  
Of righteousness for humanity  
No harm can come to them  
Though there are good men and true  
In other Faiths, Muslims must  
Be true to their own Brotherhood  
They should seek help and friendship  
From their own, and stand firm  
In constancy and patient perseverance

#### SECTION 7

- 64 Say "Oh People  
Of the Book<sup>1</sup> come  
To common terms  
As between us and you  
That we worship  
None but God,  
That we associate  
No partners with Him,  
That we erect not,  
From among ourselves,  
Lords and patrons  
Other than God"<sup>402</sup>  
If then they turn back,  
Say ye "Bear witness  
That we (at least)  
Are Muslims (bowing  
To God's Will) "

۶۴- قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ تَعَالَوْا إِلَى كَلِمَةٍ  
سَوَاءٍ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ  
أَلَّا نَعْبُدَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ  
وَلَا نُشْرِكَ بِهِ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَتَّخِذَ  
بَعْضُنَا بَعْضًا أَرْبَابًا  
مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا  
فَقُولُوا اشْهَدُوا  
بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ ٥

402 In the abstract the People of the Book would agree to all three propositions In practice they fail Apart from doctrinal lapses from the unity of the One True God there is the question of a consecrated Priesthood (among the Jews it was hereditary also) as if a mere human being—Cohen or Pope or Priest or Brahman—could claim superiority apart from his learning and the purity of his life or could stand between man and God in some special sense The same remarks apply to the worship of saints They may be pure and holy but no one can protect us or claim Lordship over us except God For *Rabb* see i 2 n Abraham was a true man of God but he could not be called a Jew or a Christian as he lived long before the Law of Moses or the Gospel of Jesus was revealed



65 Ye People of the Book!  
Why dispute ye  
About Abraham,  
When the Law and the Gospel  
Were not revealed  
Till after him?  
Have ye no understanding?

66 Ah! Ye are those  
Who fell to disputing  
(Even) in matters of which  
Ye had some knowledge!<sup>403</sup>  
But why dispute ye  
In matters of which  
Ye have no knowledge?  
It is God Who knows,  
And ye who know not!

67 Abraham was not a Jew  
Nor yet a Christian,  
But he followed the Truth  
And bowed his will to God's,  
(Which is Islam),  
And he joined not gods with  
God!<sup>404</sup>

68 Without doubt, among men,  
The nearest of kin to Abraham,  
Are those who follow him,  
As are also this Apostle  
And those who believe  
And God is the Protector  
Of those who have faith

69 It is the wish of a section  
Of the People of the Book  
To lead you astray  
But they shall lead astray  
(Not you), but themselves,  
And they do not perceive!

70 Oh People of the Book!  
Why reject ye

٦٥- يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ  
لِمَ تَحْجُجُونَ فِي إِبْرَاهِيمَ  
وَمَا أَنْزَلْنَا التَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ  
إِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِهِ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ○

٦٦- هَآؤُنْتُمْ هَؤُلَاءِ حَاجَجْتُمْ  
فِي مَا لَكُمْ بِهِ عِلْمٌ  
فَلِمَ تَحْجُجُونَ فِي مَا  
لَيْسَ لَكُمْ بِهِ عِلْمٌ  
وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ○

٦٧- مَا كَانَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ يَهُودِيًّا  
وَلَا نَصْرَانِيًّا  
وَلَكِنْ كَانَ حَنِيفًا مُسْلِمًا  
وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ○

٦٨- إِنَّ أَوْلَى النَّاسِ بِإِبْرَاهِيمَ  
لَلَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُ وَهَذَا النَّبِيُّ  
وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا  
وَاللَّهُ وَلِيُّ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ○

٦٩- وَذَاتَ ظُلُمَةٍ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ  
لَوْ يَضِلُّوكُمْ وَمَا يُضِلُّونَ إِلَّا أَنْفُسَهُمْ  
وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ ○

٧٠- يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لِمَ تَكْفُرُونَ


403 The number of sects among the Jews and Christians shows that they wrangled and disputed even about some of the matters of their own religion of which they should have had some knowledge But when they talk of Father Abraham they are entirely out of court, as he lived before their peculiar systems were evolved

404 Cf ii 135 and the whole argument in that passage

The Signs of God,  
Of which ye are  
Yourselves witnesses?

- 71 Oh ye People of the Book!  
Why do ye clothe  
Truth with falsehood,  
And conceal the Truth,  
While ye have knowledge? <sup>405</sup>

#### SECTION 8

- 72  A section of the People  
Of the Book say  
"Believe in the morning" <sup>406</sup>  
What is revealed  
To the Believers,  
But reject it at the end  
Of the day, perchance  
They may (themselves)  
Turn back,
- 73 "And believe no one  
Unless he follows  
Your religion"  
Say "True guidance  
Is the guidance of God  
(Fear ye) lest a revelation <sup>407</sup>  
Be sent to some one (else)  
Like unto that which was sent  
Unto you? Or that those  
(Receiving such revelation)  
Should engage you in argument  
Before your Lord?" <sup>408</sup>  
Say "All bounties  
Are in the hand of God  
He granteth them  
To whom He pleaseth

بَايَاتِ اللَّهِ  
وَأَنْتُمْ تَشْهَدُونَ ○

١- يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لِمَ تَكْتُمُونَ  
الْحَقَّ بِالْبَاطِلِ  
وَكُنْتُمْ تُعْلَمُونَ ○

٢- وَقَالَتْ طَائِفَةٌ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ  
اٰمِنُوْا بِالَّذِيْ  
اُنْزِلَ عَلٰى الَّذِيْنَ  
اٰمَنُوْا وَجَهَ النَّهَارِ  
وَاعْرِضُوْا اٰخِرَهُ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُوْنَ ○

٣- وَلَا تَتُومِنُوْا  
اِلَّا لِمَنْ تَدِيْعُهُمْ  
قُلْ اِنَّ الْهُدٰى هُدٰى اللّٰهِ  
اَنْ يُؤْتٰى اَحَدٌ  
مِّثْلَ مَا اُوْتِيْتُمْ  
اَوْ يُخَاجِبُوْكُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّكُمْ  
قُلْ اِنَّ الْفَضْلَ بِيْدِ اللّٰهِ  
يُوْتِيْهِ مَنْ يَّشَآءُ

405 There are many ways of preventing the access of people to the truth. One is to tamper with it or trick it out in colours of falsehood. Half truths are often more dangerous than obvious falsehoods. Another is to conceal it altogether. Those who are jealous of a man of God whom they actually see before them do not allow his credentials or virtues to be known or vilify him or conceal facts which would attract people to him. When people do this of set purpose against their own light (of which ye are yourselves witnesses) they are descending to the lowest depths of degradation and they are doing more harm to themselves than to any one else.

406 *Wajh* here has the sense of 'beginning', early part. The cynics who plotted against Islam actually asked their accomplices to join the Believers and then repudiate them.

407 The two clauses following have been variously construed and some translations leave the sense ambiguous. I have construed the conjunction *an* to mean 'lest' as it undoubtedly does in vii 172, '*an taqūlū*', etc.

408 Cf. ii 76. The People of the Book were doubly annoyed at the Muslims (1) that they should (being outside their ranks) receive God's revelations and (2) that having received such revelations they should be able to convict them out of their own scriptures before their Lord.

And God careth for all,  
And He knoweth all things "

74 For His Mercy He specially  
chooseth

Whom He pleaseth,  
For God is the Lord  
Of bounties unbounded

75 Among the People of the Book  
Are some who, if entrusted  
With a hoard of gold,<sup>409</sup>  
Will (readily) pay it back,  
Others, who, if entrusted  
With a single silver coin,<sup>410</sup>  
Will not repay it unless  
Thou constantly stoodest  
Demanding, because,  
They say, "there is no call  
On us (to keep faith)  
With these ignorant (Pagans) "<sup>411</sup>  
But they tell a lie against God,  
And (well) they know it

76 Nay — Those that keep  
Their plighted faith  
And act aright,—verily  
God loves those  
Who act aright

77 As for those who sell  
The faith they owe to God  
And their own plighted word  
For a small price,<sup>412</sup>  
They shall have no portion  
In the Hereafter "

وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ۝

٤٤- نَخْتَصُّ بِرَحْمَتِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ  
وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ ۝

٤٥- وَمِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ مَنْ إِنْ تَأْمَنَهُ  
بِقِنْطَارٍ يُدِيرُهُ إِلَيْكَ  
وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ إِنْ تَأْمَنَهُ بِدِينَارٍ لَا يُؤَدُّهُ  
إِلَيْكَ إِلَّا مَا دُمْتَ عَلَيْهِ قَائِمًا  
ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا لَنْ نَبْصُلَكَ  
فِي الْأَرْضِ سَبِيلًا  
وَيَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ

٤٦- نَبَىٰ مَنْ أَوْفَىٰ بِعَهْدِهِ  
وَاتَّقَىٰ

فَرَأَىٰ اللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَّقِينَ ۝

٤٧- إِنْ الَّذِينَ يَشْفَعُونَ عِندَ اللَّهِ  
وَأَيْمَانُهُمْ فُتِنًا فَلَيْسَ  
أُولَئِكَ لِإِخْلَاقٍ لَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ

409 Hoard of gold qinṭār a talent of 1200 ounces of gold more than a lakh of rupees See in 14 n

410 Silver coin dīnār In the later Roman Empire the denarius was a small silver coin about the size of a four anna piece It must have been current in Syria and the markets of Arabia in the time of our Apostle It was the coin whose name is translated in the English Bible by the word penny Matt xxii 19 hence the abbreviation of penny is d (=denarius) The later Arabian coin dīnār coined by the Umayyads was a gold coin after the pattern of the Byzantine (Roman) denarius aureus and weighed about 66.319 grains troy just a little more than a half sovereign

411 Every race imbued with race arrogance resorts to this kind of moral or religious subterfuge Even if its members are usually honest or just among themselves they are contemptuous of those outside their circle and cheat and deceive them without any qualms of conscience This is a lie against God

412 All our duties to our fellow creatures are referred to the service and faith we owe to God But in the matter of truth an appeal is made to our own self respect as responsible beings is it becoming that we should be false to our own word to ourselves? And then we are reminded that the utmost we can gain by falsifying God's word or being untrue to ourselves is but a miserable price We get at best something very paltry as the price for selling our very souls.

Nor will God  
Deign to speak to them  
Or look at them  
On the Day of Judgment  
Nor will He cleanse them <sup>413</sup>  
(Of sin) they shall have  
A grievous Penalty

- 78 There is among them  
A section who distort  
The Book with their tongues  
(As they read) you would think  
It is a part of the Book,  
But it is no part  
Of the Book, and they say,  
"That is from God,"  
But it is not from God  
It is they who tell  
A lie against God,  
And (well) they know it !

- 79 It is not (possible)  
That a man, to whom  
Is given the Book,  
And Wisdom,  
And the Prophetic Office,  
Should say to people  
"Be ye my worshippers  
Rather than God's" <sup>414</sup>  
On the contrary  
(He would say)  
"Be ye worshippers  
Of Him Who is truly  
The Cherisher of all  
For ye have taught  
The Book and ye  
Have studied it earnestly "

- 80 Nor would he instruct you  
To take angels and prophets <sup>415</sup>  
For Lords and Patrons  
What ! would he bid you

وَلَا يَكَلِّمُهُمُ اللَّهُ  
وَلَا يَنْظُرُ إِلَيْهِمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ  
وَلَا يُزَكِّيهِمْ  
وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ

٤٨- وَإِنَّ مِنْهُمْ لَفَرِيقًا يَلْوَنَ أَسْنَتَهُمْ  
بِالْكِتَابِ لِيُحَسِّوهُ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ  
وَمَا هُوَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَيَقُولُونَ هُوَ مِنْ  
عِنْدِ اللَّهِ وَمَا هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ  
وَيَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكُذْبَ  
وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ ○

٤٩- مَا كَانَ لِبَشَرٍ أَنْ يُؤْتِيَهُ اللَّهُ  
الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَ وَالنَّبُوءَةَ  
ثُمَّ يَقُولَ لِلنَّاسِ  
كُونُوا عِبَادًا لِي  
مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ  
وَلَكِنْ كُونُوا رَبَّيْنَ  
بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ الْكِتَابَ  
وَبِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَدْرُسُونَ ○

٨٠- وَلَا يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تَتَّخِذُوا الْمَلَائِكَةَ  
وَالنَّبِيِّينَ أَرْبَاءَ أَبَاكُمْ بِالْكَفْرِ

<sup>413</sup> Even on sinners—ordinary sinners—God will look with compassion and mercy, He will speak words of kindness and cleanse them of their sins. But those who are in active rebellion against God and sin against their own light—what mercy can they expect ?

<sup>414</sup> It is not in reason or in the nature of things that God's messenger should preach against God. Jesus came to preach the true God.

<sup>415</sup> Jesus was a prophet and the Holy Spirit with which he was strengthened was the Angel who brought the revelations to him.

To unbelief after ye have  
Bowed your will  
(To God in Islam)?

## SECTION 9

- 81 Behold<sup>1</sup> God took  
The Covenant of the Prophets,<sup>416</sup>  
Saying "I give you  
A Book and Wisdom,  
Then comes to you  
An Apostle, confirming  
What is with you,  
Do ye believe in him  
And render him help"  
God said "Do ye agree,  
And take this my Covenant  
As binding on you?"  
They said "We agree"  
He said "Then bear witness,  
And I am with you  
Among the witnesses"

- 82 If any turn back  
After this, they are  
Perverted transgressors

- 83 Do they seek  
For other than the Religion  
Of God?—while all creatures  
In the heavens and on earth  
Have, willing or unwilling,<sup>417</sup>  
Bowed to His Will  
(Accepted Islam),  
And to Him  
Shall they all return

بَعْدَ إِذْ أَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ ۝

٨١- وَإِذْ أَخَذَ اللَّهُ مِيثَاقَ النَّبِيِّينَ  
لَمَا آتَيْنَاكُمْ مِنْ كِتَابٍ وَحِكْمَةٍ  
ثُمَّ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مُصَدِّقٌ لِمَا مَعَكُمْ  
لَتُؤْمِنُنَّ بِهِ وَلَتَنْصُرُنَّهُ  
قَالَ أَأَقْرَضُكُمْ وَأَخَذْتُكُمْ عَلَىٰ ذَٰلِكُمْ  
إِصْرِي ۖ قَالُوا أَتُزَكِّرُنَا  
قَالَ فَاشْهَدُوا  
وَ أَنَا مَعَكُمْ مِنَ الشَّاهِدِينَ ۝

٨٢- فَمَنْ تَوَلَّىٰ بَعْدَ ذَٰلِكَ  
مَأْوَاهُ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ ۝

٨٣- أَفَغَيْرَ دِينِ اللَّهِ يَبْغُونَ وَلَهُ أَسْلَمَ  
مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ  
طَوْعًا وَكَرْهًا  
وَالْيَهُ يُرْجَعُونَ ۝

416 Cf II 63 and note The argument is You (People of the Book) are bound by your own oaths sworn solemnly in the presence of your own Prophets In the Old Testament as it now exists Muhammad is foretold in Deut XVIII 18, and the rise of the Arab nation in Isaiah XLII 11 for Kedar was a son of Isma'il and the name is used for the Arab nation in the New Testament as it now exists Muhammad is foretold in the Gospel of St John, XIV 16 XV 26 and XVI 7 the future Comforter cannot be the Holy Spirit as understood by Christians because the Holy Spirit already was present helping and guiding Jesus The Greek word translated Comforter is Paracletos which is an easy corruption from Periclytos which is almost a literal translation of Muhammad or Ahmad see Q LXI 6 Further there were other Gospels that have perished but of which traces still remain which were even more specific in their reference to Muhammad e g the Gospel of St Barnabas of which an Italian translation is extant in the State Library at Vienna It was edited in 1907 with an English translation by Mr Lonsdale and Laura Ragg

417 God's Truth is manifest and all that is good and true and sane and normal accepts it with joy But even where there is disease in the heart (Q II 10), or judgment is obscured by perversity every creature must eventually see and acknowledge God and His power (II 167) Cf R Bridges Testament of Beauty IV 1419 22 — For God's love is unescapable as nature's environment which if a man ignore or think to thrust it off he is the ill-natured fool that runneth blindly on death All Nature adores God and Islam asks for nothing peculiar or sectarian it but asks that we follow our nature and make our will conformable to God's Will as seen in Nature, history, and revelation Its message is universal

84 Say " We believe  
In God, and in what  
Has been revealed to us  
And to Abraham, Ismā'il,  
Isaac, Jacob, and the Tribes,  
And in (the Books)  
Given to Moses, Jesus,  
And the Prophets,  
From their Lord  
We make no distinction  
Between one and another  
Among them, and to God  
Do we submit (in Islam) "

۸۴- قُلْ أَمَّا بِاللّٰهِ وَمَا أُنزِلَ عَلَيْنَا  
وَمَا أُنزِلَ عَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ  
وِإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَالْأَسْبَاطِ  
وَمَا أُوتِيَ مُوسَىٰ وَعِيسَىٰ  
وَالنَّبِيُّونَ  
مِنْ دِينِهِمْ لَا نُفَرِّقُ  
بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِنْهُمْ  
وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ ○

85 If any one desires  
A religion other than  
Islam (submission to God),<sup>418</sup>  
Never will it be accepted  
Of him, and in the Hereafter  
He will be in the ranks  
Of those who have lost  
(All spiritual good)—

۸۵- وَمَنْ يَشْتَعْ  
عَبْرَ الْإِسْلَامِ دِينًا  
فَلَنْ يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ  
وَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ  
مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ ○

86 How shall God  
Guide those who reject  
Faith after they accepted it  
And bore witness  
That the Apostle was true  
And that Clear Signs  
Had come- unto them ?  
But God guides not  
A people unjust

۸۶- كَيْفَ يَهْدِي اللَّهُ قَوْمًا  
كَفَرُوا بَعْدَ إِيمَانِهِمْ  
وَشَهِدُوا  
أَنَّ الرُّسُولَ حَقٌّ  
وَجَاءَهُمُ الْبَيِّنَاتُ  
وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ ○

87 Of such the reward  
Is that on them (rests)

۸۷- أُولَٰئِكَ حَزَّاءُهُمْ

418 The Muslim position is clear The Muslim does not claim to have a religion peculiar to himself Islam is not a sect or an ethnic religion In its view all Religion is one for the Truth is one It was the religion preached by all the earlier Prophets It was the truth taught by all the inspired Books In essence it amounts to a consciousness of the Will and Plan of God and a joyful submission to that Will and Plan If any one wants a religion other than that he is false to his own nature as he is false to God's Will and Plan Such a one cannot expect guidance for he has deliberately renounced guidance

The curse of God,  
Of His angels,  
And of all mankind,—

88 In that will they dwell ;  
Nor will their penalty  
Be lightened, nor respite  
Be their (lot),—<sup>418a</sup>

89 Except for those that repent  
(Even) after that,  
And make amends,  
For verily God  
Is Oft-Forgiving,  
Most Merciful

90 But those who reject  
Faith after they accepted it,  
And then go on adding  
To their defiance of Faith,—  
Never will their repentance  
Be accepted, for they  
Are those who have  
(Of set purpose) gone astray

91 As to those who reject  
Faith, and die rejecting,—  
Never would be accepted  
From any such as much  
Gold as the earth contains,  
Though they should offer it  
For ransom For such  
<sup>3</sup> Is (in store) a penalty grievous,  
<sup>30</sup> And they will find no helpers

أَن عَلَيْهِمْ لَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ  
وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ ۝

٨٨- خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا لَا يُخَفَّفُ  
عَنْهُمْ الْعَذَابُ وَلَا هُمْ يُنْظَرُونَ ۝

٨٩- إِلَّا الَّذِينَ تَابُوا  
مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ  
وَأَصْلَحُوا  
فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ۝

٩٠- إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا  
بَعْدَ إِيمَانِهِمْ  
ثُمَّ زَادُوا كُفْرًا  
لَنْ نَقْبَلَ تَوْبَهُمْ  
وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الضَّالُّونَ ۝

٩١- إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَمَاتُوا وَهُمْ كُفَّارًا  
فَلَنْ يُقْبَلَ مِنْ أَحَدِهِمْ  
مِثْلُ الْأَرْضِ ذَهَبًا وَلَوِ افْتَدَى بِهِ  
أُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ  
وَمَا لَهُمْ مِنْ نَاصِرِينَ ۝

## SECTION 10

- 92 By no means shall ye  
Attain righteousness unless  
Ye give (freely) of that <sup>419</sup>  
Which ye love, and whatever  
Ye give, of a truth  
God knoweth it well

- 93 All food was lawful  
To the Children of Israel,  
Except what Israel <sup>420</sup>  
Made unlawful for itself,  
Before the Law (of Moses)  
Was revealed Say  
"Bring ye the Law  
And study it,  
If ye be men of truth"

- 94 If any, after this, invent  
A lie and attribute it  
To God, they are indeed  
Unjust wrong-doers

- 95 Say "God speaketh  
The Truth follow  
The religion of Abraham,  
The sane in faith, he  
Was not of the Pagans" <sup>421</sup>

- 96 The first House (of worship)  
Appointed for men  
Was that at Bakka <sup>422</sup>  
Full of blessing

٩٢- لَنْ تَنَالُوا الْبِرَّ حَتَّى تُنْفِقُوا مِمَّا تُحِبُّونَ  
وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ شَيْءٍ  
فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِهِ عَلِيمٌ ۝

٩٣- كُلُّ الطَّعَامِ كَانَ حَلَالًا لِبَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ  
إِلَّا مَا حَرَّمَ إِسْرَءِيلُ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ  
مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تُنْزَلَ التَّوْرَةُ  
قُلْ فَأْتُوا بِالتَّوْرَةِ فَاتْلُوهَا  
إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ۝

٩٤- فَمَنْ افْتَرَى عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ مِنْ بَعْدِ  
ذَلِكَ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ ۝

٩٥- قُلْ صَدَقَ اللَّهُ  
فَاتَّبِعُوا مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا  
وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ۝

٩٦- إِنَّ أَوَّلَ بَيْتٍ وُضِعَ لِلنَّاسِ  
لَلْبَيْتِ بِبَكَّةَ مُبَارَكًا

419 The test of charity is 'do you give something that you value greatly something that you love?' If you give your life in a Cause that is the greatest gift you can give. If you give yourself that is your personal efforts your talents your skill your learning that comes next in degree. If you give your earnings your property your possessions that is also a great gift for many people love them even more than other things. And there are less tangible things such as position reputation the well being of those we love the regard of those who can help us etc. It is unselfishness that God demands and there is no act of unselfishness however small or intangible but is well within the knowledge of God

420 The Arabs ate the flesh of the camel which is lawful in Islam but it was prohibited by the Jewish Law of Moses (Leviticus xi: 4). But that Law was very strict because of the hardness of heart of Israel because of Israel's insolence and iniquity (Q vi: 146). Before it was promulgated Israel was free to choose its own food. I take Israel here to stand for the people of Israel

421 The greater freedom of Islam in the matter of the ceremonial law compared with the Mosaic Law is not a reproach but a recommendation. We go back to an older source than Judaism—the institutions of Abraham. By common consent his faith was sound and he was certainly not a Pagan a term contemptuously applied to the Arabs by the Jews

422 Bakka same as Mecca perhaps an older name. The foundation of the Ka'ba goes back to Abraham but there are place associations in the sacred territory with the names of Adam and Eve e.g. at Arafat, the Mount of Mercy (see n 217 to n 197)



And of guidance  
For all kinds of beings <sup>423</sup>

- 97 In it are Signs  
Manifest, (for example),  
The Station of Abraham, <sup>424</sup>  
Whoever enters it  
Attains security, <sup>425</sup>  
Pilgrimage thereto is a duty  
Men owe to God,—  
Those who can afford  
The journey, but if any  
Deny faith, God stands not  
In need of any of His creatures
- 98 Say "O People of the Book!  
Why reject ye the Signs  
Of God, when God  
Is Himself witness  
To all ye do?"
- 99 Say "O ye People of the Book!  
Why obstruct ye  
Those who believe,  
From the Path of God,  
Seeking to make it crooked,  
While ye were yourselves  
Witnesses (to God's Covenant)? <sup>426</sup>  
But God is not unmindful  
Of all that ye do"
- 100 O ye who believe!  
If ye listen  
To a faction  
Among the People of the Book,  
They would (indeed)  
Render you apostates  
After ye have believed!
- 101 And how would ye  
Deny Faith while unto you  
Are rehearsed the Signs  
Of God, and among you

وَهْدَىٰ لِلْعَالَمِينَ ۝

- ٩٧- وَيَهْدِي إِلَيْكَ مَقَامَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ  
وَمَنْ دَخَلَهُ كَانَ آمِنًا  
وَاللَّهُ عَلَى النَّاسِ حَكِيمٌ  
مِّنْ أَسْطَافٍ إِلَيْهِ سَبِيلًا  
وَمَنْ كَفَرَ  
فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ عَنِ الْعَالَمِينَ ۝
- ٩٨- قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ  
لِمَ تَكْفُرُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ  
وَاللَّهُ شَهِيدٌ عَلَىٰ مَا تَعْمَلُونَ ۝
- ٩٩- قُلْ نَاهِلُ الْكِتَابِ  
لِمَ تَصُدُّونَ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ  
مَنْ آمَنَ تَبِعُونَهَا عَوَاجًا  
وَأَنْتُمْ شُهَدَاءُ  
وَمَا اللَّهُ بِعَاقِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ۝
- ١٠٠- بِآيَاتِهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا  
إِنْ تُطِيعُوا فَرِيقًا  
مِّنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ  
يُرُدُّوكُم بَعْدَ إِيمَانِكُمْ كَافِرِينَ ۝
- ١٠١- وَكَيْفَ تَكْفُرُونَ  
وَأَنْتُمْ تُنْتَلَىٰ عَنْكُمْ آيَاتُ اللَّهِ وَمِنْكُمْ

423 Ālāmin all the worlds (i. 2 n ) all kinds of beings, all nations (III 42) all creatures (III 97)

424 Station of Abraham see II 125 and n 125

425 See reference in last note

426 Cf III 81

Lives the Apostle ?  
Whoever holds  
Firmly to God  
Will be shown  
A Way that is straight

رَسُولُهُ وَمَنْ يَعْصِمْ بِاللهِ  
فَقَدْ هَدَى إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ ٥

### SECTION 11

- 102 ﴿٢﴾ ye who believe !  
Fear God as He should be <sup>427</sup>  
Feared, and die not  
Except in a state <sup>428</sup>  
Of Islam

١٠٢- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا  
اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ  
إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ ٥

- 103 And hold fast,  
All together, by the Rope <sup>429</sup>  
Which God (stretches out  
For you), and be not divided  
Among yourselves,  
And remember with gratitude  
God's favour on you,  
For ye were enemies <sup>430</sup>  
And He joined your hearts  
In love, so that by His Grace,  
Ye became brethren,  
And ye were on the brink  
Of the Pit of Fire,  
And He saved you from it  
Thus doth God make  
His Signs clear to you  
That ye may be guided

١٠٣- وَاعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا  
وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا وَاذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ  
إِذْ كُنْتُمْ أَعْدَاءً فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِكُمْ  
فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهِ إِخْوَانًا  
وَكُنْتُمْ عَلَى شَعَا حُفْرَةٍ مِنَ النَّارِ  
فَأَنْقَذَكُمْ مِنْهَا  
كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ  
لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ  
لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ ٥

- 104 Let there arise out of you  
A band of people  
Inviting to all that is good,  
Enjoining what is right,

١٠٤- وَلَتَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ  
وَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ

427 Fear is of many kinds (1) the abject fear of the coward (2) the fear of a child or an inexperienced person in the face of an unknown danger (3) the fear of a reasonable man who wishes to avoid harm to himself or to people whom he wishes to protect (4) the reverence which is akin to love for it fears to do anything which is not pleasing to the object of love The first is unworthy of man, the second is necessary for one spiritually immature the third is a manly precaution against evil as long as it is unconquered and the fourth is the seed bed of righteousness Those mature in faith cultivate the fourth at earlier stages the third or the second may be necessary they are fear but not the fear of God The first is a feeling of which anyone should be ashamed

428 Our whole being should be permeated with Islam, it is not a mere veneer or outward show

429 The simile is that of people struggling in deep water to whom a benevolent Providence stretches out a strong and unbreakable rope of rescue If all hold fast to it together their mutual support adds to the chance of their safety

430 Yathrib was torn with civil and tribal feuds and dissensions before the Apostle of God set his sacred feet on its soil After that it became the City of the Prophet Medina an unmatched Brotherhood, and the pivot of Islam This poor quarrelsome world is a larger Yathrib can we establish the sacred feet on its soil and make it a new and larger Medina?

And forbidding what is wrong  
They are the ones  
To attain felicity <sup>431</sup>

- 105 Be not like those  
Who are divided  
Amongst themselves  
And fall into disputations  
After receiving  
Clear Signs  
For them  
Is a dreadful Penalty,—

- 106 On the Day when  
Some faces will be (lit up  
With) white, and some faces <sup>432</sup>  
Will be (in the gloom of) black  
To those whose faces  
Will be black, (will be said)  
“Did ye reject Faith  
After accepting it?  
Taste then the Penalty  
For rejecting Faith”

- 107 But those whose faces  
Will be (lit with) white,—  
They will be in (the light  
Of) God's mercy therein  
To dwell (for ever)

- 108 These are the Signs  
Of God We rehearse them  
To thee in Truth  
And God means  
No injustice to any  
Of His creatures

- 109 To God belongs all  
That is in the heavens

وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ  
وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ○

١٠٥- وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ تَفَرَّقُوا  
وَاحْتَلَفُوا  
مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَهُمُ الْبَيِّنَاتُ  
وَأُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ○

١٠٦- يَوْمَ تَبْيَضُّ وُجُوهٌ وَتَسْوَدُّ وُجُوهٌ  
فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ اسْوَدَّتْ وُجُوهُهُمْ  
أَكْفَرْتُمْ بَعْدَ آيَاتِنَا  
فَذُوقُوا الْعَذَابَ  
بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْفُرُونَ ○

١٠٧- وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ انْضَضَتْ وُجُوهُهُمْ  
فَفِي رَحْمَةِ اللَّهِ  
هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ○

١٠٨- تِلْكَ آيَاتُ اللَّهِ  
نُتْلُوهَا عَلَيْكَ بِالْحَقِّ  
وَمَا اللَّهُ يُرِيدُ ظُلْمًا لِّلْعَالَمِينَ ○

١٠٩- وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمُوبِ

<sup>431</sup> *Muslim afāha falāh* the root idea is attainment of desires happiness, in this world and the next, success prosperity freedom from anxiety care or a disturbed state of mind —the opposite of *asāb* in the next verse which includes failure misery punishment or penalty agony or anguish

The ideal Muslim community is happy untroubled by conflicts or doubts sure of itself strong, united and prosperous because it invites to all that is good, enjoins the right and forbids the wrong,—a master stroke of description in three clauses

<sup>432</sup> The face (*wajh*) expresses our Personality our inmost being White is the colour of Light, to become white is to be illumined with Light, which stands for felicity the rays of the glorious light of God Black is the colour of darkness sin rebellion misery, removal from the grace and light of God These are the Signs of heaven and hell The standard of decision in all questions is the justice of God.

And on earth to Him  
Do all questions  
Go back (for decision) <sup>433</sup>

## SECTION 12

- 110 We are the best  
Of Peoples, evolved  
For mankind,  
Enjoining what is right,  
Forbidding what is wrong,  
And believing in God <sup>434</sup>  
If only the People of the Book  
Had faith, it were best  
For them among them  
Are some who have faith,  
But most of them  
Are perverted transgressors

- 111 They will do you no harm,  
Barring a trifling annoyance,  
If they come out to fight you,  
They will show you their backs,  
And no help shall they get

- 112 Shame is pitched over them <sup>435</sup>  
(Like a tent) wherever  
They are found,  
Except when under a covenant  
(Of protection) from God  
And from men, they draw  
On themselves wrath from God,  
And pitched over them  
Is (the tent of) destitution  
This because they rejected  
The Signs of God, and slew  
The Prophets in defiance of  
right, <sup>436</sup>

وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ  
وَإِلَى اللَّهِ تُرْجَعُ الْأُمُورُ ٤

١١٠- كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ  
تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ  
وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ  
وَلَوْ آمَنَ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ  
مِنْهُمْ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ  
وَكَثَرُهُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ ٥

١١١- لَنْ يَضُرَّكُمْ إِلَّا أَذًى  
وَلَنْ يُقَاتِلَوكُمْ يَوْمَ الْآدِنَارِ  
تَنْصُرُونَ ٦

١١٢- صُرِفَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الذَّلِيلَةُ أَيْ مَا تُقِفُوا  
إِلَّا بِحَبْلِ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَحَبْلِ مِنَ النَّاسِ  
وَبَاءَ وَبَعْصَبٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ  
وَصُرِفَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الْمُسْكِنَةُ ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ  
كَانُوا يَكْفُرُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ  
وَيَقْتُلُونَ الْأَنْبِيَاءَ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ

433 Cf ii 210

434 The logical conclusion to the evolution of religious history is a non sectarian non racial non doctrinal universal religion which Islam claims to be For Islam is just submission to the Will of God This implies (1) Faith, (2) doing right being an example to others to do right and having the power to see that the right prevails (3) eschewing wrong being an example to others to eschew wrong and having the power to see that wrong and injustice are defeated Islam therefore lives, not for itself, but for mankind The People of the Book if only they had faith would be Muslims for they have been prepared for Islam. Unfortunately there is Unfaith but it can never harm those who carry the banner of Faith and Right, which must always be victorious

435 *Dhuribat* I think there is a simile from the pitching of a tent Ordinarily a man's tent is a place of tranquility and honour for him The tent of the wicked wherever they are found is ignominy shame and humiliation It is pity from God or from men that gives them protection when their pride has a fall. Using the same simile of a tent in another way their home will be destitution and misery

436 Cf iii 21 n 363

This because they rebelled  
And transgressed beyond bounds

- 113 Not all of them are alike  
Of the People of the Book  
Are a portion that stand  
(For the right), they rehearse  
The Signs of God all night long,  
And they prostrate themselves<sup>437</sup>  
In adoration

- 114 They believe in God  
And the Last Day,  
They enjoin what is right,  
And forbid what is wrong,  
And they hasten (in emulation)  
In (all) good works  
They are in the ranks  
Of the righteous

- 115 Of the good that they do,  
Nothing will be rejected  
Of them, for God knoweth well  
Those that do right

- 116 Those who reject Faith,—  
Neither their possessions  
Nor their (numerous) progeny  
Will avail them aught against  
God  
They will be Companions  
Of the Fire,—dwelling  
Therein (for ever)<sup>438</sup>

- 117 What they spend  
In the life  
Of this (material) world  
May be likened to a Wind  
Which brings a nipping frost  
It strikes and destroys the harvest  
Of men who have wronged

ذَلِكَ بِمَا عَصَوْا وَكَانُوا يَعْتَدُونَ ○

١١٣- لَيْسُوا سَوَاءً ۚ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ  
أُمَّةٌ قَائِمَةٌ  
يَتْلُونَ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ  
أَنَاءَ النَّيْلِ وَهُمْ يَسْجُدُونَ ○

١١٤- بُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ  
وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ  
وَيُسَارِعُونَ فِي الْخَيْرَاتِ  
وَأُولَئِكَ مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ ○

١١٥- وَمَا يَفْعَلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَلَنْ يُكْفَرُوا  
وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِالْمُتَّقِينَ ○

١١٦- إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَنْ تُغْنِيَ عَنْهُمْ  
أَمْوَالُهُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُهُمْ  
مِنْ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا ۚ وَأُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ  
هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ○

١١٧- مَثَلُ مَا يُنْفِقُونَ فِي هَذِهِ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا  
كَمَثَلِ رِيحٍ فِيهَا صِرٌّ  
كَاتَتْ حَرَبٌ  
فَوُورَ ظَلَمُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ فَاهْلَكَتُمْ ۚ

437 In Islam we respect sincere faith and true righteousness in whatever form they appear

438 Cf III 10

Their own souls it is not God  
That hath wronged them, but  
They wrong themselves <sup>439</sup>

- 118 ﴿٤٣﴾ ye who believe !  
Take not into your intimacy  
Those outside your ranks  
They will not fail  
To corrupt you They  
Only desire your ruin  
Rank hatred has already  
Appeared from their mouths  
What their hearts conceal  
Is far worse  
We have made plain  
To you the Signs,  
If ye have wisdom

- 119 Ah ! ye are those  
Who love them,  
But they love you not,—  
Though ye believe  
In the whole of the Book <sup>440</sup>  
When they meet you,  
They say, " We believe " <sup>441</sup>  
But when they are alone,  
They bite off the very tips  
Of their fingers at you  
In their rage Say  
" Perish in your rage ,  
God knoweth well  
All the secrets of the heart "

- 120 If aught that is good  
Befalls you, it grieves them ,  
But if some misfortune  
Overtakes you, they rejoice

وَمَا ظَلَمَهُمُ اللَّهُ  
وَلَكِنْ أَنْفُسُهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ ○

١١٨- نَآئِيهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا  
لَا تَتَّخِذُوا بِطَانَةً مِّنْ دُونِكُمْ  
لَا يَأْتُونَكُمُ حَبَالًا وَذُؤَامًا عَيْتُمْ  
قَدْ نَدَاتِ الْعَصَاةَ مِنْ أَفْوَاهِهِمْ  
وَمَا تُحِىُّ صُدُورُهُمْ أَكْبَرُ  
فَدَنَيْتَنَا لَكُمْ الْآلِيبِ  
إِنْ كُنْتُمْ نَعْقِلُونَ ○

١١٩- هَآئِنُكُمْ أَوْلَاءُ يُخَيَّبُونَكُمْ وَلَا يُحِبُّونَكُمْ  
وَتَوَصُّونَ بِالْكِتَابِ كُلِّهِ  
وَإِذَا الْقَوْمُ فَالَوْا آمَنَّا  
وَإِذَا حَلَوْا  
عَظُمُوا عَلَيْكُمْ إِلَّا نَامِلُ  
مِنَ الْغَيْطِ قُلْ مُوتُوا بِعَيْطِكُمْ  
إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ ○

١٢٠- إِنْ تَسْسِكُمْ حَسَنَةً سَوْهُمْ  
وَإِنْ تُصْنِكُمْ سَيِّئَةً يَفْرَحُوا بِهَا

439 False ' spending ' may be either in false charity or in having a good time For the man who resists God's purpose neither of them is any good The essence of charity is faith and love Where these are wanting charity is no charity Some baser motive is there ostentation or even worse getting a person into the giver's power by a pretence of charity something that is connected with the life of this grasping material world What happens? You expect a good harvest But while you think good easy man full surely your greatness is a ripening there comes a nipping frost and destroys all your hopes The frost is some calamity or the fact that you are found out! Or perhaps it is 'High blown pride' as in Shakespeare's *Henry VIII* ii 3 In your despair you may blame blind Fate or you may blame God! Blind Fate does not exist for there is God's Providence which is just and good The harm or injustice has come not from God but from your own soul You wronged your soul and it suffered the frost Your base motive brought you no good it may have reduced you to poverty shame and disgrace All the brave show of the wicked in this life is but a wind charged with evil to themselves

440 Islam gives you the complete revelation the whole of the Book though partial revelations have come in all ages (Cf iii 23, and n. 366)

441 Cf ii 14

At it But if ye are constant  
And do right,  
Not the least harm  
Will their cunning  
Do to you, for God  
Compasseth round about  
All that they do

وَأِنْ تَصِدُّوْا وَتَتَّقُوا  
لَا يَضُرُّكُمْ كَيْدُهُمْ شَيْئًا  
إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ مُحِيطٌ

C 58 —God's help comes to those who strive

(III 121 148) With firmness, as it did at Badr  
Much can be learnt from the misfortunes  
At Uḥud It is not for us  
To question God's Plan, which is full  
Of wisdom and mercy for all Our duty  
Is to stand firm and unswerving,  
To obey, and in steadfast courage  
To persevere, to retrieve our mistakes,  
Not in grief and despair, but in firm hope  
In God and in contempt of pain and death

### SECTION 13.

121 Remember that morning  
Thou didst leave  
Thy household (early)  
To post the Faithful  
At their stations for battle <sup>442</sup>  
And God heareth  
And knoweth all things

١٢١- وَإِذْ عَدَوْتَ مِنْ أَهْلِكَ  
تَبَوَّعْتَ الْوُؤْمِبِينَ  
مَقَاعِدَ الْقِتَالِ  
وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ

442 The battle of Uḥud was a great testing time for the young Muslim community. Their mettle and the wisdom and strength of their Leader were shown in the battle of Badr (III 13 and note) in which the Meccan Pagans suffered a crushing defeat. The Meccans were determined to wipe off their disgrace and to annihilate the Muslims in Medina. To this end they collected a large force and marched to Medina. They numbered some 3 000 fighting men under Abū Sufyān and they were so confident of victory that their women folk came with them and showed the most shameful savagery after the battle. To meet the threatened danger the Muslim Leader Muḥammad Mustafā with his usual foresight, courage and initiative resolved to take his station at the foot of Mount Uḥud which dominates the city of Medina some three miles to the north. Early in the morning on the 7th of Shawwāl, A H 3 (January 625) he made his dispositions for battle. Medina winters are notoriously rigorous, but the warriors of Islam (700 to 1000 in number) were up early. A torrent bed (Nullah) was to their south, and the passes in the hills at their back were filled with 50 archers to prevent the enemy attack from the rear. The enemy were set the task of attacking the walls of Medina with the Muslims at their rear. In the beginning the battle went well for the Muslims. The enemy wavered but the Muslim archers in disobedience of their orders left their posts to join in the pursuit and share in the booty. There was also treachery on the part of the 300 'Hypocrites' led by Abdullāh ibn Ubai, who deserted. The enemy took advantage of the opening left by the archers and there was severe hand to hand fighting in which numbers told in favour of the enemy. Many of the Companions and Helpers were killed. But there was no rout. Among the Muslim martyrs was the gallant Ḥamza, a brother of the Apostle's father. The graves of the martyrs are still shown at Uḥud. The Apostle himself was wounded in his head and face and one of his front teeth was knocked off. Had it not been for his firmness, courage and coolness all would have been lost. As it was, the Apostle in spite of his wound and many of the wounded Muslims inspired by his example returned to the field next day and Abū Sufyān and his Meccan army thought it most prudent to withdraw. Medina was saved, but a lesson in faith, constancy, firmness, and steadfastness was learnt by the Muslims.

- 122 Remember two of your parties <sup>443</sup>  
 Meditated cowardice,  
 But God was their protector,  
 And in God should the Faithful  
 (Ever) put their trust

١٢٢- اِذْ هَمَّتْ طَائِفَتَيْنِ مِنْكُمْ  
 اَنْ تَفْشَلَا ۚ وَاللّٰهُ وَلِيُّمَا  
 وَ عَلَى اللّٰهِ فَلْتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ۝

- 123 God had helped you  
 At Badr, when ye were  
 A contemptible little force,  
 Then fear God, thus  
 May ye show your gratitude <sup>444</sup>

١٢٣- وَلَقَدْ نَصَرَكُمُ اللّٰهُ بِبَدْرٍ  
 وَاَنْتُمْ اَوَّلُكُمْ ۚ  
 فَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُشْكُرُونَ ۝

- 124 Remember thou saidst  
 To the Faithful "Is it not  
 enough  
 For you that God should help you  
 With three thousand angels  
 (Specially) sent down? <sup>445</sup>

١٢٤- اِذْ تَقُولُ لِلْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ اَلَمْ يَكْفِكُمْ  
 اَنْ يُمِدَّكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ  
 بِثَلَاثَةِ اَلْفٍ مِّنَ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةِ مُرْسِلِيْنَ ۝

- 125 "Yea,—if ye remain firm,  
 And act aright, even if  
 The enemy should rush here  
 On you in hot haste,  
 Your Lord would help you  
 With five thousand angels  
 Making a terrific onslaught " <sup>446</sup>

١٢٥- بَلٰٓى ۚ اِنْ تَصْبِرُوْا وَتَتَّقُوا  
 وَتَاْتُوْكُمْ مِّنْ قَوٰمِهِمْ هٰذَا سُبُوْدُكُمْ  
 رَبُّكُمْ بِخَمْسَةِ اَلْفٍ  
 مِّنَ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةِ مُسَوِّمِيْنَ ۝

- 126 God made it but a message  
 Of hope for you, and an  
 assurance  
 To your hearts (in any case)  
 There is no help  
 Except from God,  
 The Exalted, the Wise <sup>447</sup>

١٢٦- وَمَا جَعَلَهُ اللّٰهُ اِلَّا نَفْسًا لَّكُمْ  
 وَلِتُطْمَئِنِّيْنَ فُلُوْا نَفْسَكُمْ بِهِ ۚ  
 وَمَا النَّصْرُ اِلَّا مِنْ عِنْدِ اللّٰهِ  
 الْعَزِيْزِ الْحَكِيْمِ ۝

443 The two parties wavering in their minds were probably the Banū Sulma Khaṣrajī and the Banū Ḥaritha but they rallied under the Apostle's inspiration. That incident shows that man may be weak but if he allows his weak will to be governed by the example of men of God he may yet retrieve his weakness.

444 Gratitude to God is not to be measured by words. It should show itself in conduct and life. If all the Muslims had learnt the true lesson from the victory at Badr their archers would not have left the posts appointed for them nor the two tribes mentioned in the last note ever wavered in their faith.

445 Read verse 124 with the following five verses to get its full signification.

446 *Musawwim* this is the active voice of the verb not to be confused with the passive voice in iii 14 which has a different signification.

447 Whatever happens whether there is a miracle or not all help proceeds from God. Man should not be so arrogant as to suppose that his own resources will change the current of the world plan. God helps those who show constancy, courage and discipline and use all the human means at their disposal not those who fold their hands and have no faith. But God's help is determined on considerations exalted far above our petty human motive and by perfect wisdoms of which we can have only faint glimpses.



- 127 That He might cut off  
A fringe of the Unbelievers <sup>448</sup>  
Or expose them to infamy,  
And they should then  
Be turned back,  
Frustrated of their purpose

۱۲۷- لَيَقْطَعَنَّ طَرَفًا  
مِّنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا  
أَوْ يَكْبِتُنَّهُمْ فَيَنْقَلِبُوا خَائِبِينَ ○

- 128 Not for thee, (but for God),  
Is the decision  
Whether He turn in mercy  
To them, or punish them,  
For they are indeed wrong-  
doers <sup>449</sup>

۱۲۸- لَبَسَ لَكَ مِنَ الْأَمْرِ شَيْءٌ  
أَوْ يَتُوبَ عَلَيْهِمْ  
أَوْ يُعَذِّبَهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ ظَالِمُونَ ○

- 129 To God belongeth all  
That is in the heavens  
And on earth  
He forgiveth whom He pleaseth  
And punisheth whom He pleaseth,  
But God is Oft-Forgiving,  
Most Merciful

۱۲۹- وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمُوتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ  
يَغْفِرُ لِمَن يَشَاءُ  
وَيُعَذِّبُ مَن يَشَاءُ  
وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ۝

## SECTION 14

- 130 ﴿٤٥﴾ ye who believe '  
Devour not Usury, <sup>450</sup>  
Doubled and multiplied,  
But fear God, that  
Ye may (really) prosper <sup>451</sup>

۱۳- كَايَهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَأْكُلُوا الرِّبَا  
أَضْعَافًا مُّضَاعَفَةً  
وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ○

- 131 Fear the Fire, which is prepared  
For those who reject Faith

۱۳۱- وَاتَّقُوا النَّارَ  
الَّتِي أُعِدَّتْ لِلْكَافِرِينَ ○

448 *A fringe of the Unbelievers* an extremity an end either upper or lower. Here it may mean that the chiefs of the Meccan Pagans who had come to exterminate the Muslims with such confidence went back frustrated in their purpose. The shameless cruelty with which they and their women mutilated the Muslim corpses on the battle field will stand recorded to their eternal infamy. Perhaps it also exposed their real nature to some of those who fought for them e.g. Khālid ibn Walid who not only accepted Islam afterwards but became one of the most notable champions of Islam. He was with the Muslims in the conquest of Mecca and later on, won distinguished honours in Syria and 'Irāq.

449 Uḥūd is as much a sign post for Islam as Badr. For us in these latter days it carries an even greater lesson. God's help will come if we have faith obedience discipline unity and the spirit of acting in righteousness and justice. If we fail His mercy is always open to us. But it is also open to our enemies and those who seem to us His enemies. His Plan may be to bring sinners to repentance and to teach us righteousness and wisdom through those who seem in our eyes to be rebellious or even defiant. There may be good in them that He sees and we do not—a humbling thought that must lead to our own self examination and self-improvement.

450 Cf II 275 and note. The last verse spoke of forgiveness even to enemies. If such mercy is granted by God to erring sinners how much more is it incumbent on us poor sinners to refrain from oppressing our fellow beings in need in matters of mere material and ephemeral wealth? Usury is the opposite extreme of charity unselfishness, striving and giving of ourselves in the service of God and of our fellow men.

451 Real prosperity consists not in greed but in giving—the giving of ourselves and of our substance in the cause of God and God's truth and in the service of God's creatures.

- 132 And obey God  
And the Apostle,  
That ye may obtain mercy
- 133 Be quick in the race  
For forgiveness from your Lord,  
And for a Garden whose width  
Is that (of the whole)  
Of the heavens  
And of the earth,<sup>452</sup>  
Prepared for the righteous,—
- 134 Those who spend (freely),<sup>453</sup>  
Whether in prosperity,  
Or in adversity,  
Who restrain anger,  
And pardon (all) men,—  
For God loves those  
Who do good,—
- 135 And those who,<sup>454</sup>  
Having done something  
To be ashamed of,  
Or wronged their own souls,<sup>455</sup>  
Earnestly bring God to mind,  
And ask for forgiveness  
For their sins,—  
And who can forgive  
Sins except God?—  
And are never obstinate  
In persisting knowingly  
In (the wrong) they have done

- ١٣٢- وَأَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ  
لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ۝
- ١٣٣- وَسَارِعُوا إِلَىٰ مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ  
وَجَنَّةٍ  
عَرْضُهَا السَّمُوتُ وَالْأَرْضُ ۚ  
أُجِدَّتْ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ ۝
- ١٣٤- الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ فِي السَّرَّاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ  
وَالْكُلُوبِينَ الْعَظِ  
وَالْعَافِينَ عَنِ النَّاسِ ۗ  
وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ۝
- ١٣٥- وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا فَعَلُوا فَاحِشَةً  
أَوْ ظَلَمُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ ذَكَرُوا اللَّهَ  
فَاسْتَغْفَرُوا لِذُنُوبِهِمْ ۚ  
وَمَنْ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ ۚ  
وَلَمْ يُصِرُّوا عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلُوا  
وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ ۝

452 The lure (iii 131) is as always contrasted with the Garden in a spiritual sense—in other words Hell contrasted with Heaven. Lest we should think that heaven is a sort of enclosed material Garden somewhere in the skies we are told that its width alone is that of the whole of the heavens and the earth—all the creation we can imagine. In other words our spiritual felicity covers not merely this or that part of our being but all life and all existence. Who can measure its width, or length, or depth?

453 Another definition of the righteous (vv 134-35). So far from grasping material wealth, they give freely, of themselves and their substance not only when they are well off and it is easy for them to do so but also when they are in difficulties for other people may be in difficulties at the same time. They do not get ruffled in adversity or get angry when other people behave badly, or their own good plans fail. On the contrary they redouble their efforts. For the charity—or good deed—is all the more necessary in adversity. And they do not throw the blame on others. Even where such blame is due and correction is necessary their own mind is free from a sense of grievance for they forgive and cover other men's faults. This as far as other people are concerned. But we may be ourselves at fault and perhaps we brought some calamity on ourselves. The righteous man is not necessarily perfect. In such circumstances his behaviour is described in the next verse.

454 The righteous man when he finds he has fallen into sin or error does not whine or despair but asks for God's forgiveness, and his faith gives him hope. If he is sincere, that means that he abandons his wrong conduct and makes amends.

455 Sin is a sort of oppression of ourselves by ourselves. This follows from the doctrine of personal responsibility as opposed to that of blind fate or of an angry God or gods lying in wait for revenge or injury on mankind.

136~ For such the reward  
Is forgiveness from their Lord,  
And Gardens with rivers  
Flowing underneath,—  
An eternal dwelling  
How excellent a recompense  
For those who work (and strive) !

137 Many were the Ways of  
Life<sup>456</sup>  
That have passed away  
Before you travel through  
The earth, and see what was  
The end of those  
Who rejected Truth

138 Here is a plain statement  
To men, a guidance  
And instruction to those  
Who fear God !

139 So lose not heart,  
Nor fall into despair  
For ye must gain mastery  
If ye are true in Faith

140 If a wound hath touched you,<sup>47</sup>  
Be sure a similar wound  
Hath touched the others  
Such days (of varying fortunes)  
We give to men and men  
By turns that God may know  
Those that believe,  
And that He may take  
To Himself from your ranks  
Martyr-witnesses (to Truth)  
And God loveth not  
Those that do wrong

١٣٦- أُولَٰئِكَ جَزَاءُ هُمْ  
مَغْفِرَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَحُتَّىٰ تَجْرِي مِن  
تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا  
وَبِعَمَلِهِمُ الْحَقِيرِ ۝

١٣٧- قَدْ حَلَّتْ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ سُنَنٌ  
فَاسْرَوْا فِي الْأَرْضِ  
فَانظُرُوا  
كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُكَذِّبِينَ ۝

١٣٨- هٰذَا بَيَانٌ لِّلنَّاسِ  
وَهُدًى وَمَوْعِظَةٌ لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ ۝

١٣٩- وَلَا تَهِنُوا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا  
وَأَنْتُمْ الْأَعْلَوْنَ إِن كُنْتُمْ مُّؤْمِنِينَ ۝

١٤٠- إِن يَسْخَسَكُمُ فَزَعٌ  
فَقَدْ مَسَّ الْقَوْمَ فَزَعٌ مِّثْلُهُ  
وَنِلَٰكَ الْأَيَّامُ نَدَاؤُهَا بَيْنَ النَّاسِ  
وَلِيَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ أَمْسُوا  
وَيَتَّخِذَ مِنْكُمْ شُهَدَاءَ  
وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الظَّالِمِينَ ۝

456 Cf Ternyson (In Memoriam) Our little systems have their day They have their day and cease to be They are but broken lights of Thee And Thou O Lord art more than they Only God's Truth will last and it will gain the mastery in the end If there is defeat we must not be dejected lose heart or give up the struggle Faith means hope activity striving steadfastly on to the goal

457 These general considerations apply in particular to the disaster at Uhud (1) In a fight for truth if you are hurt be sure the adversary has suffered hurt also the more so as he has no faith to sustain him (2) Success or failure in this world comes to all at varying times we must not grumble as we do not see the whole of God's Plan (3) Men's true mettle is known in adversity as gold is assayed in fire Cf also III 134 n 467 (4) Martyrdom is in itself an honour and a privilege how glorious is the fame of Hamza the Martyr and in later times, of Hasan and Husain (5) If there is any dross in us it will be purified by resistance and struggle (6) When evil is given rope a little it works out its own destruction the orgies of cruelty indulged in by the Pagans after what they supposed to be their victory at Uhud filled up their cup of iniquity it lost them the support and adherence of the best in their own ranks and hastened the destruction of Paganism from Arabia Cf III 127 and n 448

- 141 God's object also is to purge<sup>458</sup>  
Those that are true in Faith  
And to deprive of blessing  
Those that resist Faith

۱۴۱- وَلِيُمَخِّصَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا  
وَيُنَحِّنَ الْكَافِرِينَ ۝

- 142 Did ye think that ye  
Would enter Heaven<sup>459</sup>  
Without God testing  
Those of you who fought hard  
(In His Cause) and  
Remained steadfast?

۱۴۲- أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَنْ تُدْخَلُوا الْجَنَّةَ  
وَلَمَّا نَعْلَمِ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا مِنْكُمْ  
وَيَعْلَمِ الصَّابِرِينَ ۝

- 143 Ye did indeed  
Wish for Death  
Before ye met him  
Now ye have seen him  
With your own eyes,  
(And ye flinch!)

۱۴۳- وَلَقَدْ كُنْتُمْ تَمَنَّوْنَ الْمَوْتَ  
مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تَلْقَوْهُ ۖ  
فَقَدْ رَأَيْتُمُوهُ وَأَنْتُمْ تَنْظُرُونَ ۝

#### SECTION 15

- 144 Muhammad is no more<sup>460</sup>  
Than an Apostle many  
Were the Apostles that passed  
away  
Before him If he died  
Or were slain, will ye then  
Turn back on your heels?  
If any did turn back  
On his heels, not the least  
Harm will he do to God,  
But God (on the other hand)  
Will swiftly reward those  
Who (serve him) with gratitude

۱۴۴- وَمَا مُحَمَّدٌ إِلَّا رَسُولٌ ۖ  
قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ الرُّسُلُ أَفَإَنْتَ مَكَانَ  
أَوْ قَتَلَ  
انْقَلَبْتُمْ عَلَى أَعْقَابِكُمْ  
وَمَنْ يَنْقَلِبْ عَلَى عَقْبَيْهِ  
فَلَنْ يَضُرَّ اللَّهَ شَيْئًا  
وَسَيَجْزِي اللَّهُ الشَّاكِرِينَ ۝

- 145 Nor can a soul die  
Except by God's leave,

۱۴۵- وَمَا كَانَ لِنَفْسٍ أَنْ تَمُوتَ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ

458 The purge or purification was in two senses (1) It cleared out the Hypocrites from the ranks of the Muslim warriors (2) The testing time strengthened the faith of the weak and wavering for suffering has its own mission in life The Apostle's example—wounded but staunch and firmer than ever—put new life into the Community

459 Cf n 214

460 This verse primarily applies to the battle of Uhud in the course of which a cry was raised that the Apostle was slain. He had indeed been severely wounded but Fatḥa Abū Bakr and Ali were at his side and his own unexampled bravery saved the Muslim army from a rout. This verse was recalled again by Abū Bakr when the Apostle actually died a natural death eight years later to remind people that God Whose Message he brought lives for ever. And we have need to remember this now and often for two reasons (1) when we feel inclined to pay more than human honour to one who was the truest the purest and the greatest of men and thus in a sense to compound for our forgetting the spirit of his teaching and (2) when we feel depressed at the chances and changes of time and forget that the eternal God lives and watches over us and over all His creatures now as in all history in the past and in the future

The term being fixed  
As by writing If any  
Do desire a reward  
In this life, We shall give it <sup>461</sup>  
To him, and if any  
Do desire a reward  
In the Hereafter, We shall  
Give it to him  
And swiftly shall We reward  
Those that (serve us with)  
gratitude

146 How many of the Prophets  
Fought (in God's way),  
And with them (fought)  
Large bands of godly men ?  
But they never lost heart  
If they met with disaster  
In God's way, nor did  
They weaken (in will)  
Nor give in And God  
Loves those who are  
Firm and steadfast

147 All that they said was  
"Our Lord' forgive us  
Our sins and anything  
We may have done  
That transgressed our duty  
Establish our feet firmly,  
And help us against  
Those that resist  
Faith "

148 And God gave them  
A reward in this world,  
And the excellent reward  
Of the Hereafter For God  
Loveth those who do good

كُنُفًا مُؤَجَّلًا  
وَمَنْ يُرِدْ  
ثَوَابَ الدُّنْيَا نُؤْتِهِ مِنْهَا  
وَمَنْ يُرِدْ ثَوَابَ الْآخِرَةِ  
نُؤْتِهِ مِنْهَا  
وَسَجَّزِي الشَّاكِرِينَ ○

١٣٦- وَكَأَيِّنْ مِنْ نَبِيِّ قُتِلَ مَعَهُ  
رَبِّيُونَ كَثِيرٌ مِمَّا وَهَنُوا  
لِمَا أَصَابَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ  
وَمَا صَعَفُوا  
وَمَا اسْتَكَانُوا  
وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الصَّابِرِينَ ○

١٣٧- وَمَا كَانَ قَوْلُهُمْ إِلَّا أَنْ قَالُوا  
رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا  
ذُنُوبَنَا وَاسْرِفْنَا فِي أَمْرِنَا  
وَنُتِبْ أَقْدَامَنَا  
وَانصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ ○

١٣٨- فَآتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ ثَوَابَ الدُّنْيَا وَحُسْنَ  
ثَوَابِ الْآخِرَةِ وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ۞

C 59 —Uhud showed how dangerous it was  
(III 149-180) To lend ear to enemy suggestions,  
To disobey orders, dispute, lose courage,  
Or seek selfish ends, some even followed

461 There is a slight touch of irony in this As applied to the archers at Uhud who deserted their posts for the sake of plunder they might have got some plunder, but they put themselves and the whole of their army into jeopardy For a little worldly gain they nearly lost their souls On the other hand those who took the long view and fought with staunchness and discipline,—their reward was swift and sure If they died they got the crown of martyrdom If they lived they were heroes honoured in this life and the next

The evil course of turning back  
 But great is God's mercy where He helps,  
 No harm can come Trust your Leader  
 The Hypocrites, in withdrawing from battle,  
 Were really helping the Unbelievers,  
 But glorious were those who knew  
 No fear those killed in the Cause of God  
 Yet live and thrive and do rejoice,  
 And never can those who fight against Faith  
 Hurt in the least the Cause of God

## SECTION 16

149 ﴿٢٥﴾ ye who believe!

If ye obey the Unbelievers,  
 They will drive you back  
 On your heels, and ye  
 Will turn back (from Faith)  
 To your own loss

١٤٩- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِن تَطِيعُوا الَّذِينَ  
 كَفَرُوا رُدُّوكُمْ عَلَىٰ أَعْقَابِكُمْ  
 فَتَنَقَّلُوا خِسِرِينَ ٥

150 Nay, God is your Protector,  
 And He is the best of helpers

١٥٠- بَلِ اللَّهُ مَوْلَاكُمْ ۖ وَهُوَ خَيْرُ النَّاصِرِينَ ٥

151 Soon shall We cast terror  
 Into the hearts of the Unbelievers,  
 For that they joined companions  
 With God, for which He had sent  
 No authority their abode  
 Will be the Fire and evil  
 Is the home of the wrong-doers!

١٥١- سَنُلْقِي فِي قُلُوبِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا الرُّعْبَ  
 بِمَا أَشْرَكُوا بِاللَّهِ  
 مَا لَهُمْ يُنْزِلُ بِهِ سُلْطَانًا ۖ وَمَأْوَاهُمُ النَّارُ  
 وَبِئْسَ مَثْوًى لِلظَّالِمِينَ ٥

152 God did indeed fulfil  
 His promise to you  
 When ye with His permission  
 Were about to annihilate  
 Your enemy,—until ye flinched  
 And fell to disputing  
 About the order,<sup>462</sup>  
 And disobeyed it  
 After He brought you in sight  
 (Of the Booty) which ye covet  
 Among you are some  
 That hanker after this world  
 And some that desire  
 The Hereafter Then did He

١٥٢- وَلَقَدْ صَدَقَ اللَّهُ وَعْدَهُ إِذْ  
 اتَّخَذْتُمْ لَهُمْ يَدًا ۚ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا فَتِنْتُمْ  
 وَتَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ  
 وَعَصَيْتُمْ مِمَّا نَعَىٰ مَا أَرْسَلَكُمْ مِّنَ  
 رِّجَالٍ  
 مِنْكُمْ مَّنْ يُرِيدُ الدُّنْيَا  
 وَمِنْكُمْ مَّنْ يُرِيدُ الْآخِرَةَ ۚ

<sup>462</sup> The order was not to run after booty but strictly to maintain discipline. Uhud was in the beginning a victory for the Muslims. Many of the enemy were slain, and they were retiring when a part of the Muslims, against orders, ran in pursuit, attracted by the prospects of booty. See note to III 121

Divert you from your foes  
In order to test you <sup>463</sup>  
But He forgave you  
For God is full of grace  
To those who believe

- 153 Behold! ye were climbing up  
The high ground, without even  
Casting a side glance  
At any one, and the Apostle  
In your rear was calling you  
Back There did God give you  
One distress after another  
By way of requital, <sup>464</sup>  
To teach you not to grieve  
For (the booty) that had escaped  
you  
And for (the ill) that had befallen  
you  
For God is well aware  
Of all that ye do

- 154 After (the excitement)  
Of the distress, He sent down  
Calm on a band of you  
Overcome with slumber, <sup>465</sup>  
While another band  
Was stirred to anxiety  
By their own feelings,  
Moved by wrong suspicions  
Of God—suspicions due  
To Ignorance They said  
"What affair is this of ours?" <sup>466</sup>  
Say thou "Indeed, this affair

ثُمَّ صَرَفَكُمْ  
عَنْهُمْ لِيَنْتَلِيَكُمْ وَلَقَدْ عَفَا عَنْكُمْ  
وَاللَّهُ دُوْ فَصِّلَ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ○

١٥٣- اِذْ تَصْعَدُونَ  
وَلَا تُلَوُّنَ عَلَىٰ أَحَدٍ ۚ وَالتَّاسُوْنَ  
يَدْعُوْكُمْ فِيْ اٰخِرِكُمْ  
فَاَنَابَكُمْ غَمًّا بِعِيٍّ  
لِّكَيْلَا تَحْزَنُوْا  
عَلٰى مَا فَاتَكُمْ  
وَلَا مَا اَصَابَكُمْ  
وَاللَّهُ خَبِيْرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ ○

١٥٤- ثُمَّ اَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ الْغَمِّ  
اَمْنًا نُّعَاسًا يَّعْشٰى طَآئِفَةً مِنْكُمْ  
وَطَآئِفَةٌ قَدْ اُهَمَّتْهُمْ اَنْفُسُهُمْ  
يَظُنُوْنَ بِاللّٰهِ عَيْرَ الْحَقِّ طَنَ الْحَٰهِلَةِ  
بِقَوْلُوْنَ هَلْ لَّنَا مِنَ الْاَمْرِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ  
قُلْ اِنَّ الْاَمْرَ

463 The disobedience seemed at first pleasant they were chasing the enemy and there was the prospect of booty But when the gap was noticed by the enemy they turned the flank round the hill and nearly overwhelmed the Muslims Had it not been for God's grace and the firmness of their Leader and his immediate Companions they would have been finished

464 It would seem that a party of horsemen led by the dashing Khalid ibn Walid came through the gap in the passes where the Muslim archers should have been and in the confusion that arose the retreating foe rallied and turned back on the Muslims From the low ground on the bank of the Nullah the Muslims retreated in their turn and tried to gain the hill They had a double loss (1) they were baulked of the booty they had run after and (2) their own lives and the lives of their whole army were in danger and many lives were actually lost from their ranks Their own lives being in danger they had hardly time to grieve for the loss of booty or the general calamity But it steadied them, and some of them stood the test

465 After the first surprise when the enemy turned on them a great part of the Muslims did their best and seeing their mettle the enemy withdrew to his camp There was a lull the wounded had rest, those who had fought the hard fight were visited by kindly Sleep sweet Nature's nurse In contrast to them was the band of Hypocrites, whose behaviour is described in the next note

466 The Hypocrites withdrew from the fighting Apparently they had been among those who had been counselling the defence of Medina within the walls instead of boldly coming out to meet the enemy Their distress was caused by their own mental state the sleep of the just was denied them and they continued to murmur of what might have been Only fools do so wise men face actualities

Is wholly God's " They hide  
In their minds what they  
Dare not reveal to thee  
They say (to themselves)  
" If we had had anything  
To do with this affair,  
We should not have been  
In the slaughter here "  
Say " Even if you had remained  
In your homes, those  
For whom death was decreed  
Would certainly have gone forth  
To the place of their death ",  
But (all this was)<sup>467</sup>  
That God might test  
What is in your breasts  
And purge what is  
In your hearts  
For God knoweth well  
The secrets of your hearts

- 155 Those of you<sup>468</sup>  
Who turned back  
On the day the two hosts  
Met,—it was Satan  
Who caused them to fail,  
Because of some (evil)  
They had done But God  
Has blotted out (their fault)  
For God is Oft-forgiving,  
Most Forbearing

#### SECTION 17

- 156 **﴿** ye who believe!  
Be not like the Unbelievers,  
Who say of their brethren,  
When they are travelling  
Through the earth or engaged  
In fighting " If they had stayed  
With us, they would not  
Have died, or been slain "

كَلَّا لِلّٰهِ يُخْفُونَ فِيْ اَنْفُسِهِمْ  
مَا لَا بُدَّوْنَ لَكَ يَقُولُوْنَ  
لَوْ كَانَ لَنَا مِنَ الْاَمْرِ شَيْءٌ  
مَا قَتَلْنَا هٰهٰنَا قُلْ لَّوْ كُنْتُمْ  
فِيْ بُيُوتِكُمْ  
لَبَرَّرَ الَّذِيْنَ كُتِبَ عَلَيْهِمْ  
الْقَتْلُ اِلَى مَصَاجِعِهِمْ  
وَلِيَبْتَلِيَ اللّٰهُ مَا فِيْ صُدُوْرِكُمْ  
وَلِيُمَخِّصَ مَا فِيْ قُلُوْبِكُمْ  
وَاللّٰهُ عَلِيْمٌ بِدَابِ الصُّدُوْرِ

١٥٥- اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ تَوَلَّوْا مِنْكُمْ يَوْمَ الْاَتْقٰى  
الْجَمْعِ اِنَّمَا اسْتَكْبَرُوا الشَّيْطٰنُ  
بِبَعْضِ مَا كَسَبُوْا  
وَلَقَدْ عَفَا اللّٰهُ عَنْهُمْ  
اِنَّ اللّٰهَ غَفُوْرٌ حَلِيْمٌ

١٥٦- يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَا تَكُوْنُوْا كَالَّذِيْنَ  
كَفَرُوْا وَقَالُوْا اِلٰحُوْرَابِهِمْ  
اِذَا صَرُّوْا فِى الْاَرْضِ اَوْ كَانُوْا عُرٰى  
لَوْ كَانُوْا عِنْدَ نَآمٍ مَّا نَاوَا وَمَا قُتِلُوْا

467 That testing by God is not in order that it may add to His knowledge for He knows all It is in order to help us subjectively to mould our will and purge us of any grosser motives that will be searched out by calamity If it is a hardened sinner the test brings conviction out of his own self Cf also iii 140

468 It was the duty of all who were able to fight to fight in the sacred cause at Uhud But a small section were timid they were not quite as bad as those who railed against God or those who thoughtlessly disobeyed orders. But they still failed in their duty It is our inner motives that God regards These timorous people were forgiven by God Perhaps they were given another chance perhaps they rose to it and did their duty then



This that God may make it  
A cause of sighs and regrets  
In their hearts It is God  
That gives Life and Death,<sup>469</sup>  
And God sees well  
All that ye do

157 And if ye are slain, or die,  
In the way of God,  
Forgiveness and mercy  
From God are far better  
Than all they could amass<sup>470</sup>

158 And if ye die, or are slain,  
Lo! it is unto God  
That ye are brought together

159 It is part of the Mercy  
Of God that thou dost deal  
Gently with them<sup>471</sup>  
Wert thou severe  
Or harsh-hearted,  
They would have broken away  
From about thee so pass over  
(Their faults), and ask  
For (God's) forgiveness  
For them, and consult  
Them in affairs (of moment)  
Then, when thou hast  
Taken a decision,  
Put thy trust in God

لِيَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ ذَلِكَ حَسْرَةً فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ  
وَاللَّهُ يُخَيِّتُ  
وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ۝

١٥٧- وَلَئِنْ قُتِلْتُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ  
أَوْ مِتُّمْ لَمَغْفِرَةٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ  
وَرَحْمَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِّمَّا يَجْمَعُونَ ۝

١٥٨- وَلَئِنْ مِتُّمْ أَوْ قُتِلْتُمْ  
لَا إِلَى اللَّهِ تُحْشَرُونَ ۝

١٥٩- فَبِمَا رَحْمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ لِنْتَ لَهُمْ  
وَلَوْ كُنْتَ فَظًّا غَلِيظَ الْقَلْبِ  
لَا نَقَضُوا مِنْ حَوْلِكَ  
فَاعْفُ عَنْهُمْ  
وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ  
وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ  
فَإِذَا عَزَمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ

469 It is want of faith that makes people afraid (1) of meeting death (2) of doing their duty when it involves danger as in travelling in order to earn an honest living or fighting in a sacred cause. Such fear is part of the punishment for want of faith. If you have faith there is no fear in meeting death for it brings you nearer to your goal nor in meeting danger for a sufficient cause because you know that the keys of life and death are in God's hands. Nothing can happen without God's Will. If it is God's Will that you should die your staying at home will not save you. If it is His Will that you should live the danger you incur in a just cause brings you glory. Supposing it is His Will that you should lose your life in the danger there are three considerations that would make you eager to meet it: (1) dying in doing your duty is the best means of reaching God's Mercy; (2) the man of faith knows that he is not going to an unknown country of which he has no news, he is going nearer to God; and (3) he is being "brought together unto God" i.e. he will meet all his dear ones in faith instead of the separation which the souls without faith fear. He looks forward to a surer reunion than is possible in this life.

470 Notice a beautiful little literary touch here. At first sight you would expect the second person here (you could amass) to match the second person in the earlier clause. But remember that the second person in earlier clause refers to the man of faith and the third person in the last line refers to the Unbelievers as if it said: Of course you as a man of faith would not be for hoarding riches your wealth—duty and the mercy of God—is far more precious than anything the Unbelievers can amass in their selfish lives.

471 The extremely gentle nature of Muhammad endeared him to all and it is reckoned as one of the Mercies of God. One of the Apostle's titles is A Mercy to all Creation. At no time was this gentleness this mercy this long suffering with human weaknesses more valuable than after a disaster like that at Uhud. It is a God-like quality which then as always bound and binds the souls of countless men to him.

For God loves those  
Who put their trust (in Him)

- 160 If God helps you,  
Non can overcome you  
If He forsakes you,  
Who is there, after that,  
That can help you ?  
In God, then,  
Let Believers put their trust

- 161 **No** prophet could (ever)<sup>472</sup>  
Be false to his trust  
If any person is so false,  
He shall, on the Day  
Of Judgment, restore  
What he misappropriated ,  
Then shall every soul  
Receive its due,—  
Whatever it earned,—  
And none shall be  
Dealt with unjustly

- 162 Is the man who follows  
The good pleasure of God  
Like the man who draws  
On himself the wrath  
Of God, and whose abode  
Is in Hell ?—  
A woeful refuge !

- 163 They are in varying grades  
In the sight of God,  
And God sees well  
All that they do

- 164 God did confer  
A great favour

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ ○

١٦٠- إِنْ يَنْصُرْكُمُ اللَّهُ فَلَا غَالِبَ لَكُمْ  
وَإِنْ يَخْذُلْكُمْ  
فَمَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَنْصُرُكُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ  
وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ○

١٦١- وَمَا كَانَ لِنَبِيٍّ أَنْ يَغُلَّ  
وَمَنْ يَغْلُلْ  
يَأْتِ بِمَا عَلَّ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ  
ثُمَّ تَوَلَّى  
كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا كَسَبَتْ  
وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ○

١٦٢- أَقِمْنَ الشَّعْرَ رِضْوَانِ اللَّهِ  
كَمَنْ بَاءَ إِسْحَاطٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ  
وَمَا أُولَٰئِهِمْ جَهَنَّمُ  
وَبِئْسَ الْمَصِيرُ ○

١٦٣- هُمْ دَرَجَاتٌ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ  
وَاللَّهُ بِصِيْرِهِمْ يَعْلَمُونَ ○

١٦٤- لَقَدْ مَنَّ اللَّهُ

472 Besides the gentleness of his nature Mustafā was known from his earliest life for his trustworthiness. Hence his title of *Al Amīn*. Unscrupulous people often read their own low motives into other men and their accusation which is meant to injure fastens on the various virtues for which the man they attack is well known. Some of the Hypocrites after Uhud raised some doubts about the division of the spoils thinking to sow the seeds of poison in the hearts of the men who had deserted their posts in their craving for booty. Those low suspicions were never believed in by any sensible people and they have no interest for us now. But the general principles here declared are of eternal value. (1) Men of God do not act from unworthy motives. (2) Those who act from such motives are spiritually the lowest of creatures and they will make no profit. (3) A man of God is not to be judged by the same standard as a greedy creature. (4) In God's eyes there are various grades of men and we must try to understand and appreciate such grades. If we trust our Leader, we shall not question his honesty without cause. If he is dishonest, he is not fit to be a leader.

On the Believers <sup>473</sup>

When He sent among them  
An Apostle from among  
Themselves, rehearsing  
Unto them the Signs  
Of God, sanctifying them,  
And instructing them  
In Scripture and Wisdom,  
While, before that,  
They had been  
In manifest error

- 165 **W**hat! When a single  
Disaster smites you,  
Although ye smote (your enemies)  
With one twice as great,  
Do ye say?—  
“Whence is this?”  
Say (to them)  
“It is from yourselves  
For God hath power  
Over all things” <sup>474</sup>

- 166 What ye suffered  
On the day the two armies  
Met, was with the leave  
Of God, in order that  
He might test <sup>475</sup> the Believers,—

- 167 And the Hypocrites also <sup>475</sup>  
These were told “Come,  
Fight in the way of God,  
Or (at least) drive  
(The foe from your city)”  
They said “Had we known  
How to fight, we should  
Certainly have followed you”

عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذْ بَعَثَ فِيهِمْ  
رَسُولًا مِنْ أَنْفُسِهِمْ  
يَتْلُوا عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ  
وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ  
وَإِنْ كَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ  
لَعَنَى صَلِيلٍ مُبِينٍ ○

١٦٥- أَوَلَمْ آتَاكُمْ كُفْرُكُمْ مُصِيبَةً  
قَدْ أَصَابَكُمْ مِثْلُهَا  
قُلْتُمْ أَتَى هَذَا  
مَنْ هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ أَنْفُسِكُمْ  
إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ○

١٦٦- وَمَا أَصَابَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْتَقَى الْجَمْعَانِ  
فِي بَادِيِ اللَّهِ  
وَلِيَعْلَمَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ○

١٦٧- وَلِيَعْلَمَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَقِيلَ لَهُمْ  
تَعَالَوْا فَانْقُرُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ  
أَوْ ادْعُوا  
فَالْوَالُونَ يَعْلَمُ فِتْنَالَهُ أَتَبَعَكُمْ

473 Cf II 151

474 If Uhud was a reverse to the Muslims they had inflicted a reverse twice as great on the Meccans at Badr. This reverse was not without God's permission for He wanted to test and purify the faith of those who followed Islam and to show them that they must strive and do all in their power to deserve God's help. If they disobeyed orders and neglected discipline they must attribute the disaster to themselves and not to God.

475 Test literally know See n 467 to III 154

476 The testing of the Hypocrites was the searching out of their motives and exposing them to the sight of their brethren who might otherwise have been taken in. In the first place they gave counsels of caution in their minds it was nothing but cowardice. In the second place, what they wished was not the good of the community but its being placed in a contemptible position. When others were for self sacrifice, they were for ease and fair words. Pretending to be Muslims, they were nearer to Unbelief. Ironically they pretended to know nothing of fighting, and left their devout brethren to defend their faith and ideals. If that devout spirit did not appeal to them, they might at least have defended their city of Medina when it was threatened,—defended their hearths and homes as good citizens.

They were that day  
Nearer to Unbelief  
Than to Faith,  
Saying with their lips  
What was not in their hearts  
But God hath full knowledge  
Of all they conceal

- 168 (They are) the ones that say,  
(Of their brethren slain),  
While they themselves  
Sit (at ease) "If only  
They had listened to us,  
They would not have been slain"  
Say "Avert death  
From your own selves,  
If ye speak the truth"

- 169 Think not of those  
Who are slain in God's way  
As dead Nay, they live,<sup>477</sup>  
Finding their sustenance  
In the Presence of their Lord,

- 170 They rejoice in the Bounty  
Provided by God  
And with regard to those  
Left behind, who have not  
Yet joined them (in their bliss),  
The (Martyrs) glory in the fact  
That on them is no fear,  
Nor have they (cause to) grieve<sup>478</sup>

- 171 They glory in the Grace  
And the Bounty from God,  
And in the fact that  
God suffereth not

هُمْ لِلْكَافِرِينَ مَوَدَّةٌ أَقْرَبُ مِنْهُمْ لِلْإِيمَانِ  
يَقُولُونَ يَا فَوَاهِيَهُمْ  
مَا لَيْسَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ  
وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يَكْتُمُونَ ٥

١٦٨- الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِخْوَانَهُمْ  
وَقَعَدُوا لَنَا طَاعُونًَا مَا فَتَلْنَا  
قُلْ فَأَدْرُؤَا عَنْ أَنْفُسِكُمُ الْمَوْتَ  
إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ٥

١٦٩- وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ  
اللَّهِ أَمْوَاتًا  
كَلَّ أَحْيَاءٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ يُزْرَقُونَ ٥

١٧٠- فَرِحْنِ بِمَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ  
وَيَسْتَبْشِرُونَ  
بِالَّذِينَ لَهُمْ لِحَافُهُمْ مِنَ حُلُوفِهِمْ  
أَلَّا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ٥

١٧١- يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ بِنِعْمَةِ اللَّهِ وَفَضْلِهِ  
وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ

477 A beautiful passage about the Martyrs in the cause of Truth. They are not dead they live,—and in a far higher and deeper sense than in the life they have left. Even those who have no faith in the Hereafter honour those that die in their cause with the crown of immortality in the minds and memories of generations unborn. But in Faith we see a higher truer and less relative immortality. Perhaps 'immortality' is not the right word in this connection as it implies a continuation of this life. In their case through the gateway of death they enter the true real Life as opposed to its shadow here. Our carnal life is sustained with carnal food and its joys and pleasures at their best are those which are projected on the screen of this material world. Their real Life is sustained from the ineffable Presence and Nearness of God. Cf. II 154 and see how the idea is further developed here.

478 The Martyrs not only rejoice at the bliss they have themselves attained. The dear ones left behind are in their thoughts. It is part of their glory that they have saved their dear ones from fear, sorrow, humiliation and grief, in this life even before they come to share in the glories of the Hereafter.

Note how the refrain "on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve" comes in here with a new and appropriate meaning. Besides other things, it means that the dear ones have no cause to grieve at the death of the Martyrs, rather have they cause to rejoice.

The reward of the Faithful  
To be lost (in the least)

## SECTION 18

- 172 **¶** Of those who answered  
The call of God  
And the Apostle,  
Even after being wounded,<sup>49</sup>  
Those who do right  
And refrain from wrong  
Have a great reward,—

- 173 Men said to them  
"A great army is gathering  
Against you"  
And frightened them  
But it (only) increased  
Their Faith they said  
"For us God sufficeth,  
And He is the best  
Disposer of affairs"

- 174 And they returned  
With Grace and Bounty  
From God no harm  
Ever touched them  
For they followed  
The good pleasure of God  
And God is the Lord  
Of bounties unbounded

- 175 **¶** It is only the Evil One  
That suggests to you  
The fear of his votaries  
Be ye not afraid  
Of them, but fear Me,  
If ye have Faith

- 176 Let not those grieve thee  
Who rush headlong  
Into Unbelief  
Not the least harm  
Will they do to God  
God's Plan is that He

لَا يُضِيعُهُ آخِرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۝

١٤٢- الَّذِينَ اسْتَجَابُوا لِلَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ  
مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا أَصَابَهُمُ الْقَرْحُ  
لِلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا مِنْهُمْ وَاتَّقُوا  
آخِرَ عَظِيمٍ ۝

١٤٣- الَّذِينَ قَالُوا لَهُمُ النَّاسُ  
إِنَّ النَّاسَ قَدْ جَمَعُوا لَكُمْ  
فَاخْشَوْهُمْ  
فَرَادَهُمْ إِيمَانًا ۝

وَقَالُوا حَسْبُنَا اللَّهُ وَنِعْمَ الْوَكِيلُ ۝

١٤٤- فَانْقَلَبُوا بِنِعْمَةِ رَبِّهِمْ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَفَضِّلَ  
لَهُمْ يَمَسُّهُمْ سُوءٌ  
وَأَتَوْا رِضْوَانَ اللَّهِ  
وَاللَّهُ دُو فَضْلٍ عَظِيمٍ ۝

١٤٥- إِنَّمَا دَلِكُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ يُخَوِّفُ أَوْلِيَاءَهُ  
فَلَا تَخَافُوهُمْ  
وَخَافُوا إِن كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ ۝

١٤٦- وَلَا يَحْزَنْكَ الَّذِينَ يُسَارِعُونَ فِي  
الْكُفْرِ إِنَّهُمْ لَأَنْ يَضُرُّوا اللَّهَ شَيْئًا  
يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ

479 After the confusion at Uhud men rallied round the Apostle. He was wounded and they were wounded but they were all ready to fight again. Abū Sufyān with his Meccans withdrew but left a challenge with them to meet him and his army again at the fair of Badr Ṣuġrā next year. The challenge was accepted, and a picked band of Muslims under their intrepid Leader kept the tryst but the enemy did not come. They returned not only unharmed but enriched by the trade at the fair and (it may be presumed) strengthened by the accession of new adherents to their cause.

Will give them no portion  
In the Hereafter,  
But a severe punishment

- 177 Those who purchase  
Unbelief at the price  
Of faith,—  
Not the least harm  
Will they do to God,  
But they will have  
A grievous punishment
- 178 Let not the Unbelievers  
Think that Our respite  
To them is good for themselves  
We grant them respite  
That they may grow <sup>480</sup>  
In their iniquity  
But they will have  
A shameful punishment

- 179 God will not leave  
The Believers in the state  
In which ye are now,  
Until He separates  
What is evil  
From what is good <sup>481</sup>  
Nor will He disclose  
To you the secrets  
Of the Unseen <sup>482</sup>  
But He chooses  
Of His Apostles  
(For the purpose)  
Whom He pleases  
So believe in God  
And His Apostles  
And if ye believe  
And do right,  
Ye have a reward  
Without measure

أَلَا يَجْعَلُ لَهُمُ حَقًّا فِي الْآخِرَةِ  
وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ٥

١٤٤- إِنَّ الَّذِينَ اشْتَرُوا  
الْكُفْرَ بِالْإِنْسَانِ  
لَنْ تَصُرُوا اللَّهَ شَيْئًا  
وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ٥

١٤٥- وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا  
أَنَّمَا سُبُلِي لَهُمْ خَرَرٌ لِّأَنفُسِهِمْ  
إِنَّمَا سُبُلِي لَهُمْ لَيَرْدٌ آدُوًا إِنَّمَا  
وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُّهِينٌ ٥

١٤٦- مَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيَذَرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ  
عَلَىٰ مَا أَنْتُمْ عَلَيْهِ  
حَتَّىٰ يَمِيزَ الْخَيْبَتِ مِنَ الطَّيِّبِ  
وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ  
لِيُظْهِرَكُمْ عَلَى الْغَيْبِ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ  
يَخْتِبِي مَنْ يُرْسِلْهُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ  
وَأَمْسُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ  
وَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا  
وَتَقَفُوا فَلَكُمْ أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ ٥

<sup>480</sup> That the cup of their iniquity may be full The appetite for sin grows with what it feeds on The natural result is that the sinner sinks deeper into sin If there is any freedom of will this naturally follows though God's Grace is always ready for the repentant If the Grace is rejected the increase of iniquity makes the nature of iniquity plainer to those who might otherwise be attracted by its glitter The working of God's Law is therefore both just and merciful See also the next verse

<sup>481</sup> The testing of good men by calamities and evil men by leaving them in the enjoyment of good things is part of the Universal Plan in which some freedom of choice is left to man The psychological and subjective test is unfailing and the separation is effected partly by the operation of the human wills to which some freedom is allowed But it must be effected if only in the interests of the good

<sup>482</sup> Man in his weak state would be most miserable if he could see the secrets of the Future or the secrets of the Unseen But things are revealed to him from time to time as may be expedient for him by Apostles chosen for the purpose Our duty is to hold fast by faith and lead a good life

180 And let not those  
Who covetously withhold  
Of the gifts which God  
Hath given them of His Grace,<sup>483</sup>  
Think that it is good for them  
Nay, it will be the worse  
For them soon shall the things  
Which they covetously withheld  
Be tied to their necks  
Like a twisted collar,<sup>484</sup>  
On the Day of Judgment  
To God belongs the heritage<sup>485</sup>  
Of the heavens and the earth,  
And God is well acquainted  
With all that ye do

١٨٠- وَلَا يَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ  
يَبْخُلُونَ بِمَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ  
هُوَ خَيْرٌ أَلَهُمْ  
بَلْ هُوَ شَرٌّ لَهُمْ سَيُطَوَّقُونَ  
مَا بَلَغُوا بِهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ  
وَلِلَّهِ مِيرَاثُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ  
وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ ۝

C 60 — Regard, unmoved, the taunts of those  
(III 181 200) Who laugh at faith, nor let their falsehood  
Nor their seeming prosperity, raise  
Questions in your minds All  
Who can read the Signs of God in Nature  
Know His wisdom, goodness, power,  
And justice They know His promise  
Is sure, and in humble prayer,  
Wholly put their trust in Him

### SECTION 19

181 God hath heard  
The taunt of those  
Who say " Truly, God<sup>486</sup>  
Is indigent and we  
Are rich !"—We shall  
Certainly record their word

١٨١- لَقَدْ سَمِعَ اللَّهُ قَوْلَ الَّذِينَ  
قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ فَقِيرٌ  
وَمَحْنُ أَغْيَاءٍ سَكَتُبُ مَا قَالُوا ۝

483 The gifts are of all kinds material gifts such as wealth property strength of limbs etc or intangible gifts such as influence birth in a given set intellect, skill insight etc or spiritual gifts of the highest kind The spending of all these things (apart from what is necessary for ourselves) for those who need them is charity and purifies our own character The withholding of them (apart from our needs) is similarly greed and selfishness, and is strongly condemned

484 By an apt metaphor the miser is told that his wealth or the other gifts which he hoarded will cling round his neck and do him no good He will wish he could get rid of them but he will not be able to do so According to the Biblical phrase in another connection they will hang like a millstone round his neck (Matt xviii 6) The metaphor here is fuller He hugged his wealth or his gifts about him They will become like a heavy collar the badge of slavery round his neck They will be tied tight and twisted and they will give him pain and anguish instead of pleasure Cf also xvii 13

485 Another metaphor is now introduced Material wealth or property is only called ours during our short life here it then descends to heirs and heirs until it goes to the ultimate heir the State So all gifts are ours in trust only they ultimately revert to God to Whom belongs all that is in the heavens or on earth

486 In II 245 we read Who is he that will loan to God a beautiful loan? In other places charity or spending in the way of God is metaphorically described as giving to God The holy Apostle often used that expression in appealing for funds to be spent in the way of God The scoffers mocked and said So God is indigent and we are rich! This blasphemy was of a piece with all their conduct in history in slaying the Prophets and men of God

And (their act) of slaying  
The Prophets in defiance<sup>487</sup>  
Of right, and We shall say  
"Taste ye the Penalty  
Of the Scorching Fire!"

- 182 "This is because  
Of the (unrighteous deeds)  
Which your hands  
Sent on before ye<sup>488</sup>  
For God never harms  
Those who serve Him"

- 183 They (also) said "God took  
Our promise not to believe  
In an apostle unless  
He showed us a sacrifice  
Consumed by fire<sup>489</sup>  
(From heaven)" Say  
"There came to you  
Apostles before me,  
With Clear Signs  
And even with what  
Ye ask for why then  
Did ye slay them,  
If ye speak the truth?"

- 184 Then if they reject thee,  
So were rejected apostles  
Before thee, who came  
With Clear Signs,  
Books of dark prophecies,  
And the Book of Enlightenment<sup>490</sup>

وَقَتْلَهُمُ الرُّسُلَ  
بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ

وَنَقُولُ ذُوقُوا عَذَابَ الْحَرِيقِ ○

۱۸۲- ذَٰلِكَ بِمَا قَدَّمْتُمْ

وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ

لَيْسَ بِظَلَّامٍ لِّلْعَمِيدِ ○

۱۸۳- الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ عٰهَدَ إِلَيْنَا

أَلَّا نُؤْمِنَ لِرَسُولٍ

حَتَّىٰ يَأْتِينَا بَقْرَبَانٍ تَأْكُلُهُ النَّارُ

فَلَمَّا قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مِّنْ قَبْلِي

بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَالَّذِينَ قُلْتُمْ

فَلِمَ قَتَلْتُمُوهُمْ

إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ○

۱۸۴- فَإِنْ كَذَّبُوكَ فَقَدْ كَذَّبَ رَسُولُ

مِّنْ قَبْلِكَ جَاءُوا بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ

وَالزُّبُرِ وَالْكِتَابِ الْمُنِيرِ ○

487 For the expression slaying in defiance of right Cf iii 21 and iii 112

488 Cf ii 95 and note

489 Burnt sacrifices figured in the Mosaic Law and in the religious ceremonies long before Moses but it is not true that the Mosaic Law laid down a fire from heaven on a burnt sacrifice as a test of the credentials of Prophets. Even if it had been so did the Jews obey the Prophets who showed this Sign? In Leviticus ix 23 24 we are told of a burnt offering prepared by Moses and Aaron and there came a fire out from before the Lord and consumed upon the altar the burnt offering and the fat. Yet the people rebelled frequently against Moses and rebellion against a Prophet is spiritually an attempt to kill him. Abel's offering (sacrifice) was probably a burnt offering it was accepted by God and he was killed by Cain out of jealousy Gen iv 3-8. Mosaic sacrifices were no longer needed by the people of Jesus or the people of Muhammad.

490 The three things mentioned in the Text are (1) Clear Signs (*bayyinat*) (2) *zabūr* and (3) *kitāb al Munir*. The signification of (1) I have explained in the note to iii 62 as far as they relate to Jesus. In a more general sense it means the clear evidence which God's dealings furnish about a man of God having a true mission e.g. Moses in relation to Pharaoh. I have translated (2) as Books of Dark Prophecies as the root *zabara* implies something hard. The Commentators are not agreed but the Prophetic writings which seemed to contemporaries difficult to understand may well come under this description. David's Psalms (*Zabūr* iv 163) may also come under this description. As to (3) there is no doubt about the literal meaning of the words, the Book of Enlightenment. But what does it precisely refer to? I take it to mean the fundamental guide to conduct—the clear rules laid down in all Dispensations to help men to lead good lives.



185 Every soul shall have  
A taste of death <sup>491</sup>  
And only on the Day  
Of Judgment shall you  
Be paid your full recompense  
Only he who is saved  
Far from the Fire  
And admitted to the Garden  
Will have attained  
The object (of Life)  
For the life of this world  
Is but goods and chattels  
Of deception <sup>492</sup>

186. Ye shall certainly  
Be tried and tested  
In your possessions  
And in your personal selves, <sup>493</sup>  
And ye shall certainly  
Hear much that will grieve you,  
From those who received  
The Book before you  
And from those who  
Worship many gods  
But if ye persevere  
Patiently, and guard  
Against evil,—then  
That will be  
A determining factor  
In all affairs.

187 And remember  
God took a Covenant  
From the People of the Book, <sup>494</sup>  
To make it known  
And clear to mankind,  
And not to hide it,

١٨٥- كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ  
وَإِنَّمَا تُوَفَّقُونَ أُجُورَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ  
فَمَنْ رُحِّزَ عَنِ النَّارِ  
وَأُدْخِلَ الْجَنَّةَ فَقَدْ فَازَ  
وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا  
إِلَّا مَتَاعُ الْغُرُورِ ۝

١٨٦- لَنَبْلُوَنَّ فِي أَمْوَالِكُمْ وَأَنفُسِكُمْ  
وَلَنَسْمَعَنَّ مِنَ الَّذِينَ  
أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ  
وَمِنَ الَّذِينَ  
أَشْرَكُوا أَذَىٰ كَثِيرًا  
وَإِنْ تَصْبِرُوا  
وَتَتَّقُوا  
فَإِنَّ ذَلِكَ مِنْ عَزْمِ الْأُمُورِ ۝

١٨٧- وَإِذْ أَخَذَ اللَّهُ مِيثَاقَ  
الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ  
لَتُعْبُدَنَّهُ لِلنَّاسِ وَلَا تَكْفُرُونَهُ ۝

491 The soul will not die but the death of the body will give a taste of death to the soul when the soul separates from the body The soul will then know that this life was but a probation And seeming inequalities will be adjusted finally on the Day of Judgment

492 Cf Longfellow's Psalm of Life 'All this world's a fleeting show For man's illusion given The only Reality will be when we have attained our final goal

493 Not wealth and possessions only (or want of them), are the means of our trial All our personal talents, knowledge opportunities, and their opposites,—in fact everything that happens to us and makes up our personality is a means of our testing So is our Faith we shall have to put up for it many insults from those who do not share it

494 Truth—God's Message—comes to any man or nation as a matter of sacred trust It should be broadcast and published and taught and made clear to all within reach Privileged priesthood at once erects a barrier But worse—when such priesthood tampers with the truth, taking what suits it and ignoring the rest it has sold God's gift for a miserable ephemeral profit, how miserable, it will learn when Nemesis comes

But they threw it away  
Behind their backs,<sup>495</sup>  
And purchased with it  
Some miserable gain !  
And vile was the bargain  
They made !

فَنَبَذُوهُ وَرَاءَ ظُهُورِهِمْ  
وَأَشْتَرُوا بِهِ ثَمًا قَلِيلًا  
فَيْتَسْ مَا شَرُّوْنَ ○

- 188 Think not that those  
Who exult in what they  
Have brought about, and love  
To be praised for what  
They have not done,—<sup>496</sup>  
Think not that they  
Can escape the Penalty  
For them is a Penalty  
Grievous indeed

١٨٨- لَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ يَفْرَحُونَ بِمَا آتَوْا  
وَيُحِبُّونَ أَنْ يُحْمَدُوا  
بِمَا لَمْ يَفْعَلُوا فَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّهُمْ  
بِمَعَاذٍ مِنَ الْعَذَابِ  
وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ○

- 189 To God belongeth  
The dominion  
Of the heavens  
And the earth,  
And God hath power  
Over all things

١٨٩- وَلِلَّهِ  
مُلْكُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ  
وَاللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

## SECTION 20

- 190 Behold ! In the creation  
Of the heavens and the earth,  
And the alternation  
Of Night and Day,—<sup>497</sup>  
There are indeed Signs  
For men of understanding,—

١٩٠- إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ  
وَإِخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ  
لَآيَاتٍ لِّأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ ○

- 191 Men who celebrate  
The praises of God,  
Standing, sitting,  
And lying down on their sides,<sup>498</sup>  
And contemplate  
The (wonders of) creation

١٩١- الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ قِيَمًا  
وَقُعُودًا وَ عَلَى حُنُوقِهِمْ  
وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي خَلْقِ

495 Cf 11 101

496 A searching picture of the worldly wise ! They may cause mischief and misery to others but gloat over any glory it may bring them ! They may trample down God's truths and enthrone false standards of worship They may take credit for virtues they do not possess and seeming successes that come in spite of their despicable deceptions

497 See 11 164 The two items mentioned here are just brief symbols recalling the six or seven mentioned in the other passage And those too are but brief symbols and reminders of the glorious majesty of God and His goodness to man

498 That is in all postures which again is symbolical of all circumstances, personal, social, economic, historical and other

In the heavens and the earth,  
(With the thought)  
"Our Lord! not for naught  
Hast Thou created (all) this!  
Glory to Thee! Give us<sup>499</sup>  
Salvation from the Penalty  
Of the Fire

192 "Our Lord! any whom Thou  
Dost admit to the Fire,  
Truly Thou coverest with shame,  
And never will wrong doers  
Find any helpers!

193 "Our Lord! we have heard  
The call of one calling  
(Us) to Faith, 'Believe ye  
In the Lord,' and we  
Have believed Our Lord!  
Forgive us our sins,  
Blot out from us  
Our iniquities, and take  
To Thyself our souls  
In the company of the righteous

194 "Our Lord! Grant us  
What Thou didst promise  
Unto us through Thine Apostles,  
And save us from shame  
On the Day of Judgment  
For Thou never breakest  
Thy promise"

195 And their Lord hath accepted  
Of them, and answered them  
"Never will I suffer to be lost  
The work of any of you,

السَّمُوتِ وَالْأَرْضِ  
رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هَذَا بَاطِلًا  
سُبْحَنَكَ  
فَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ ○

١٩٢- رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ مَنْ تَدْخِلُ النَّارَ  
فَقَدْ أَحْرَيْتَهُ  
وَمَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِنْ أَنْصَارٍ ○

١٩٣- رَبَّنَا إِنَّا سَمِعْنَا  
مُنَادًا مُنَادِيًا لِلْإِيمَانِ  
أَنْ آمِنُوا بِرَبِّكُمْ فَآمَنَّا  
رَبَّنَا وَاعْفُ رُبَّنَا دُنُونَا  
وَكُفِّرْ عَنَّا سَيِّئَاتِنَا  
وَتَوَفَّنَا مَعَ الْأَبْرَارِ ○

١٩٤- رَبَّنَا وَإِنَّا مَا وَعَدْتُنَا  
عَلَى رُسُلِكَ  
وَلَا تُخْزِنَا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ  
إِنَّكَ لَا تَخْلِفُ الْوَعْدَ ○

١٩٥- فَاسْتَجَابَ لَهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ أَنِّي لَا أُضِيعُ  
عَمَلَ عَامِلٍ

499. It is the thought of Salvation that connects all these glories with man. Otherwise man would be a miserable contemptible creature in these beauties and wonders of Nature. With his high destiny of Salvation he can be lifted even higher than these glories! The Fire is a symbol of penalty. We pray for salvation from the penalty.

Be he male or female  
 Ye are members, one of another <sup>500</sup>  
 Those who have left their homes,  
 Or been driven out therefrom,  
 Or suffered harm in My Cause,  
 Or fought or been slain,—  
 Verily, I will blot out  
 From them their iniquities,  
 And admit them into Gardens  
 With rivers flowing beneath,—  
 A reward from the Presence <sup>501</sup>  
 Of God, and from His Presence  
 Is the best of rewards "

196 Let not the strutting about  
 Of the Unbelievers  
 Through the land  
 Deceive thee

197 Little is it for enjoyment  
 Their ultimate abode  
 Is Hell what an evil bed  
 (To lie on) !

198 On the other hand, for those  
 Who fear their Lord,  
 Are Gardens, with rivers  
 Flowing beneath, therein  
 Are they to dwell (for ever),—  
 A gift from the Presence  
 Of God, and that which is  
 In the Presence of God  
 Is the best (bliss)  
 For the righteous

199 And there are, certainly,  
 Among the People of the Book,

مِنْكُمْ مَنْ ذَكَرَ أَوْ أَنْشَىٰ  
 بَعْضُكُمْ مِنْ بَعْضٍ فَأَلْزَمَ الْكَيْدَ الْمَاجِرُونَ  
 وَأُخْرِجُوا مِنْ ديارِهِمْ  
 وَأُودُوا فِي سَبِيلِي  
 وَقُتِلُوا وَقُتِلُوا  
 لَا كُفْرَ عَنْهُمْ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ وَلَا دُخْلَ لَهُمْ  
 جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ  
 ثَوَابًا مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ  
 وَاللَّهُ عِنْدَهُ حُسْنُ الثَّوَابِ ○

١٩٦- لَا تَعُرِّكَ تَقَلُّبُ الْكَافِرِينَ  
 كَفَرُوا فِي الْأَسْوَاقِ ○

١٩٧- مَتَاعٌ قَلِيلٌ سَتَمَأْوَاهُمْ هَلِيمٌ  
 وَبُشْرَى الْمَهَادُ ○

١٩٨- لَكِنَّ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا لَهُمْ  
 لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ  
 خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا  
 نُزُلًا مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ  
 وَمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ لِلْأَبْرَارِ ○

١٩٩- وَإِنَّ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ

<sup>500</sup> In Islam the equal status of the sexes is not only recognised but insisted on. If sex distinction which is a distinction in nature does not count in spiritual matters still less of course would count artificial distinctions such as rank wealth position race colour birth etc

<sup>501</sup> Here and in iii 198 below and in many places elsewhere stress is laid on the fact that whatever gift or reward or bliss will come to the righteous its chief merit will be that it proceeds from the Presence of God Himself. Nearness to God expresses it better than any other symbol

Those who believe in God,  
In the revelation to you,  
And in the revelation to them,  
Bowing in humility to God  
They will not sell  
The Signs of God  
For a miserable gain !  
For them is a reward  
With their Lord,  
And God is swift in account

200 O ye who believe !  
Persevere in patience <sup>502</sup>  
And constancy , vie  
In such perseverance ,  
Strengthen each other ,  
And fear God ,  
That ye may prosper <sup>503</sup>

لَمَنْ يُؤْمِنْ بِاللَّهِ وَمَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْكُمْ  
وَمَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْهِمْ  
خُشِعِينَ لِلَّهِ لَا يَشْتُرُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ  
شَيْئًا قَلِيلًا أُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ  
أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ  
إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ ○

٢٠- بَايَعُوا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اصْبِرُوا  
وَصَابِرُوا  
وَرَابِطُوا  
وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ۝



502 The full meaning of *Ṣabr* is to be understood here viz Patience perseverance constancy, self restraint refusing to be cowed down These virtues we are to exercise for ourselves and in relation to others we are to set an example so that others may vie with us, and we are to vie with them, lest we fall short in this way we strengthen each other and bind our mutual relations closer, in our common service to God

503 Prosperity (*faḍl*) here and in other passages is to be understood in a wide sense including prosperity in our mundane affairs as well as in spiritual progress In both cases it implies happiness and the attainment of our wishes, purified by the love of God

INTRODUCTION TO SŪRA IV (*Nisāa*)

This Sūra is closely connected chronologically with Sūra III Its subject matter deals with the social problems which the Muslim community had to face immediately after Uhud While the particular occasion made the necessity urgent, the principles laid down have permanently governed Muslim Law and social practice

Broadly speaking, the Sūra consists of two parts (1) that dealing with women, orphans, inheritance, marriage, and family rights generally, and (2) that dealing with the recalcitrants in the larger family, the community at Medina, *viz*, the Hypocrites and their accomplices

**Summary** — It begins with an appeal to the solidarity of mankind, the rights of women and orphans, and the implications of family relationship, including an equitable distribution of property after death (iv 1-14 and C 61)

While the decencies of family life should be enforced, women should be held in honour and their rights recognized, in marriage, property, and inheritance, and this principle of goodness should be extended to all beings, great and small (iv 15-42, and C 62)

The sections in Medina, not yet in the Muslim community, should not go after false gods, but should accept the authority of the Apostle, and obey him Then it will be their privilege to be admitted to a great and glorious Fellowship (iv 43-70, and C 63)

The Believers should organize in self defence against their enemies, and beware of the secret plots and mischiefs of the Hypocrites, how deserters should be treated (iv 71-91, and C 64)

Caution about the taking of life, recommendations for leaving places inimical to Islam, religious duties in the midst of war (iv 92-104, and C 65)

Treachery and the lure of evil (iv 105-126, and C 66)

Women and orphans to be justly dealt with, Faith must go with justice, sincerity, and moderation in speech (iv 127-152, and C 67)

Where People of the Book went wrong, with honourable exceptions (iv 153-176, and C 68)

C 61 — All mankind are one, and mutual rights

(iv 1-14) Must be respected the sexes

Must honour, each the other,

Sacred are family relationships

That rise through marriage

And women bearing children,

Orphans need especial loving care,

In trust is held all property,

With duties well defined,

And after death, due distribution

Should be made in equitable shares

To all whose affection, duty,

And trust shed light and joy

On this our life below

## Sūra IV

Nisā, or The Women

In the name of God, Most Gracious  
Most Merciful

- 1 **﴿﴾** mankind ! reverence  
Your Guardian Lord,  
Who created you  
From a single Person,<sup>504</sup>  
Created, of like nature,  
His mate, and from them twain  
Scattered (like seeds)  
Countless men and women, —  
Reverence God, through Whom<sup>505</sup>  
Ye demand your mutual (rights),  
And (reverence) the wombs<sup>506</sup>  
(That bore you) for God  
Ever watches over you

- 2 **﴿﴾** No orphans restore their  
property  
(When they reach their age),  
Nor substitute (your) worthless  
things  
For (their) good ones, and devour  
not  
Their substance (by mixing it up)<sup>507</sup>



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

۱- يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ  
الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ  
وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا  
رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً  
وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ  
وَالْأَرْحَامَ

إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا

۲- وَآتُوا الْيَتَامَىٰ أَمْوَالَهُمْ  
وَلَا تَبَدَّلُوا الْحَبِثَ بِالطَّيِّبِ  
وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَهُمْ

504 *Nafs* may mean (1) soul (2) self (3) person living person (4) will good pleasure, as in iv 4 below *Minhā* I follow the construction suggested by Imām Rāzī The particle *min* would then suggest here not a portion or a source of something else but a species a nature a similarity The pronoun *hā* refers of course to *Nafs* The Biblical story of the creation of Eve from a rib of Adam may be allegorical but we need not assume it in Quranic teaching

505 All our mutual rights and duties are referred to God We are his creatures His Will is the standard and measure of Good and our duties are measured by our conformity with His Will Our wills are ours to make them Thine says Tennyson (*In Memoriam*) Among ourselves (human beings) our mutual rights and duties arise out of God's Law the sense of Right that is implanted in us by him

506 Among the most wonderful mysteries of our nature is that of sex The unregenerate male is apt in the pride of his physical strength to forget the all important part which the female plays in his very existence and in all the social relationships that arise in our collective human lives The mother that bore us must ever have our reverence The wife through whom we enter parentage must have our reverence Sex which governs so much of our physical life and has so much influence on our emotional and higher nature deserves—not our fear, or our contempt or our amused indulgence but —our reverence in the highest sense of the term With this fitting introduction we enter on a discussion of women orphans and family relationships

507 Justice to orphans is enjoined and three things are particularly mentioned as temptations in the way of a guardian (1) He must not postpone restoring all his ward's property when the time comes subject to iv 5 below (2) If there is a list of property it is not enough that that list should be technically followed the property restored must be of equal value to the property received the same principle applies where there is no list (3) If property is managed together, or where perishable goods must necessarily be consumed the strictest probity is necessary when the separation takes place and this is insisted on See also ii 220 and note

With your own For this is  
Indeed a great sin

- 3 If ye fear that ye shall not  
Be able to deal justly  
With the orphans,<sup>508</sup>  
Marry women of your choice,  
Two, or three, or four,  
But if ye fear that ye shall not  
Be able to deal justly (with them),  
Then only one, or (a captive)  
That your right hands possess  
That will be more suitable,  
To prevent you  
From doing injustice<sup>509</sup>

- 4 And give the women  
(On marriage) their dower  
As a free gift, but if they,  
Of their own good pleasure,  
Remit any part of it to you,  
Take it and enjoy it  
With right good cheer

- 5 No those weak of  
understanding<sup>510</sup>  
Make not over your property,<sup>511</sup>  
Which God hath made  
A means of support for you,  
But feed and clothe them  
Therewith, and speak to them  
Words of kindness and justice

إِلَىٰ أَمْوَالِكُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ مُحِبًّا كَبِيرًا ۝

۳- وَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تُقْسِطُوا فِي السَّاتِئِ  
فَانْكِحُوا مَا طَابَ لَكُمْ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ  
مَثْنَىٰ وَثُلَاتٍ وَرُفَعًا  
وَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا فَوَاحِدَةً  
أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ  
ذَٰلِكَ أَذَىٰ ۖ أَلَّا تَعْلَمُوا ۝

۴- وَأَتُوا النِّسَاءَ صَدُقَاتِهِنَّ مِحْلَةً  
فَإِنْ طِبْنَ لَكُمْ عَنْ شَيْءٍ  
مِّنْهُ نَفْسًا  
فَكُلُوهُ هَنِيئًا مَّرِيَّتًا ۝

۵- وَلَا تُوْثِقُوا السَّعْيَاءَ  
أَمْوَالِكُمْ الَّتِي جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ قِيَمًا  
وَارْزُقُوهُمْ مِنْهَا وَأَكْسُوهُمْ  
وَقُولُوا لَهُمْ قَوْلًا مَّعْرُوفًا ۝

508 Notice the conditional clause about orphans introducing the rules about marriage. This reminds us of the immediate occasion of the promulgation of this verse. It was after Uhud when the Muslim community was left with many orphans and widows and some captives of war. Their treatment was to be governed by principles of the greatest humanity and equity. The occasion is past but the principles remain. Marry the orphans if you are quite sure that you will in that way protect their interests and their property with perfect justice to them and to your own dependants if you have any. If not, make other arrangements for the orphans.

509 The unrestricted number of wives of the Times of Ignorance was now strictly limited to a maximum of four provided you could treat them with perfect equality in material things as well as in affection and immaterial things. As this condition is most difficult to fulfil I understand the recommendation to be towards monogamy.

510 This applies to orphans but the wording is perfectly general and defines principles like those of Chancery in English Law and the Court of Wards in Indian Law. Property has not only its rights but also its responsibilities. The owner may not do just what he likes absolutely; his right is limited by the good of the community of which he is a member and if he is incapable of understanding it his control should be removed. This does not mean that he is harshly dealt with. On the contrary his interests must be protected and he must be treated with special kindness because of his incapacity.

511 Your property. Ultimately all property belongs to the Community and is intended for the support of you i.e. the community. It is held in trust by a particular individual. If he is incapable he is put aside but gently and with kindness. While his incapacity remains, the duties and responsibilities devolve on his guardian even more strictly than in the case of the original owner for he may not take any of the profits for himself unless he is poor and in that case his remuneration for his trouble must be on a scale that is no more than just and reasonable.



- 6 **T**ake trial of orphans  
Until they reach the age<sup>512</sup>  
Of marriage, if then ye find  
Sound judgment in them,  
Release their property to them,  
But consume it not wastefully,  
Nor in haste against their growing  
up

If the guardian is well-off,  
Let him claim no remuneration,  
But if he is poor, let him  
Have for himself what is  
Just and reasonable  
When ye release their property  
To them, take witnesses  
In their presence  
But all-sufficient  
Is God in taking account<sup>513</sup>

- 7 **F**rom what is left by parents  
And those nearest related<sup>514</sup>  
There is a share for men  
And a share for women,  
Whether the property be small  
Or large,—a determinate share

- 8 But if at the time of division  
Other relatives, or orphans,  
Or poor, are present,  
Feed them out of the (property),  
And speak to them  
Words of kindness and justice

- 9 Let those (disposing of an estate)  
Have the same fear in their minds  
As they would have for their own  
If they had left a helpless family  
behind  
Let them fear God, and speak  
Words of appropriate (comfort)<sup>515</sup>

٦- وَابْتَلُوا الْيَتَامَىٰ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا بَلَغُوا النِّكَاحَ  
فَإِنْ أَنَسْتُمْ مِنْهُمْ رُشْدًا  
فَادْفَعُوا إِلَيْهِمْ أَمْوَالَهُمْ  
وَلَا تَأْكُلُوهَا إِسْرَافًا وَبِدَارًا أَنْ يَكْفُرُوا  
وَمَنْ كَانَ غَنِيًّا فَلْيَسْتَعْفِفْ  
وَمَنْ كَانَ فَقِيرًا فَلْيَأْكُلْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ  
فَإِذَا دَفَعْتُمْ إِلَيْهِمْ أَمْوَالَهُمْ  
فَشْهَدُوا عَلَيْهِمْ  
وَكَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ حَسِيبًا ۝

٧- لِلرِّجَالِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَالِدَانِ  
وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ وَلِلنِّسَاءِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ  
الْوَالِدَانِ وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ  
مِمَّا قَلَّ مِنْهُ أَوْ كَثُرَ ۝

٨- وَإِذَا حَصَرَ الْقِسْمَةَ أُولُو الْقُرْبَىٰ وَ  
الْيَتَامَىٰ وَالسَّكِينُ فَارْزُقُوهُمْ مِنْهُ  
وَقُولُوا لَهُمْ قَوْلًا مَعْرُوفًا ۝

٩- وَلْيَخْشَ الَّذِينَ لَوْ تَرَكَوْا مِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ  
ذُرِّيَّةً ضِعَفًا حَافُوا عَلَيْهِمْ  
فَلْيَتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْيَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا ۝

512 The age of marriage is the age when they reach their majority

513 It is good to take human witnesses when you faithfully discharge your trust but remember that, however fully you satisfy your fellow men when you give your account to them there is a stricter account due from you to God If you are righteous in God's eyes you must follow these stricter standards

514 I have resisted the temptation to translate 'next of kin,' as this phrase has a technical meaning in Indian Law referring to certain kinds of heirs whereas here the people meant are those whose inheritance is to be divided The shares are specified Here the general principles are laid down that females inherit as well as males and that relatives who have no legal shares orphans and indigent people are not to be treated harshly if present at the division Their 'feed' may be charged to the property as part of the funeral expenses

515 It is a touching argument addressed to those who have to divide an estate How anxious would you be if you had left a helpless family behind If others do so help and be kind

- 10 Those who unjustly  
Eat up the property  
Of orphans, eat up  
A Fire into their own  
Bodies they will soon  
Be enduring a blazing Fire<sup>1</sup>

## SECTION 2

- 11 God (thus) directs you  
As regards your children's<sup>516</sup>  
(Inheritance) to the male,  
A portion equal to that  
Of two females if only  
Daughters, two or more,<sup>517</sup>  
Their share is two thirds  
Of the inheritance,  
If only one, her share  
Is a half

For parents, a sixth share  
Of the inheritance to each,  
If the deceased left children,  
If no children, and the parents  
Are the (only) heirs, the mother  
Has a third, if the deceased  
Left brothers (or sisters),  
The mother has a sixth  
(The distribution in all cases  
Is) after the payment  
Of legacies and debts  
Ye know not whether  
Your parents or your children  
Are nearest to you  
In benefit These are  
Settled portions ordained<sup>518</sup>

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ بَاكُلُونَ آمَـٰلَ الْيَتَامَىٰ ظُلُمًا  
إِنَّمَا يَكُلُونَ فِي بُطُونِهِمْ نَارًا  
وَسَبَّـٰصُونَ سَعِيرًا ۝ ع

—يُوصِيكُمُ اللّٰهُ فِيْٓ اٰوْلَادِكُمْ  
لِلذَّكَرِ مِثْلُ حَظِّ الْاُنثٰى ۚ  
فَاِنْ كُنَّ نِسَآءً فَوْقَ اِثْنَتَيْنِ  
فَلَهُنَّ ثُلُثَا مَا تَرَكَ ۚ وَاِنْ كَانَتْ وَاحِدَةً  
فَلَهَا النِّصْفُ ۚ وَلَا يُوْٓبٰى  
لِكُلِّ وَاحِدٍ مِّنْهُمَا الشُّدُسُ  
مِمَّا تَرَكَ اِنْ كَانَ لَهُ وَلَدٌ ۚ وَاِنْ لَّمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ  
وَلَدٌ وَوَرِثَةٌ اَبَوُهٗ فَلِلْاُمِّهِ الثُّلُثُ ۚ  
وَاِنْ كَانَ لَهُ اِخْوَةٌ  
فَلِلْاُمِّهِ الشُّدُسُ مِنْ نَّعْدٍ وَصِيَّةٍ  
يُّوصٰى بِهَا اَوْ ذِيْنَ  
اٰوْلَاكُمُ وَاَنۡسَاؤُكُمْ لَا تَدْرُوْنَ  
اَيُّهُمْ اَقْرَبُ لَكُمْ نَعۡمًا فَرِيضَةً

516 The principles of inheritance law are laid down in broad outline in the Qur'ān the precise details have been worked out on the basis of the Apostle's practice and that of his Companions and by interpretation and analogy Muslim jurists have collected a vast amount of learning on this subject and this body of law is enough by itself to form the subject of life long study Here we shall deal only with the broad principles to be gathered from the Text as interpreted by the Jurists

(1) The power of testamentary disposition extends over only one third of the Property the remaining two thirds are distributed among heirs as laid down (2) All distribution takes place after the legacies and debts (including funeral expenses) have first been paid (3) Legacies cannot be left to any of the heirs included in the scheme of distribution or it will amount to upsetting the shares and undue preference of one heir to another (4) Generally but not always the male takes a share double that of a female in his own category

517 At first sight the Arabic words seem to mean if more than two daughters But the alternative in the next clause is if only one daughter Logically therefore the first clause must mean if daughters two or more This is the general interpretation and is confirmed by the supplementary provision in 176 at the end of the Sūra which should be read along with this

518. This verse deals with the portions allotted to (a) children and (b) parents The next verse deals with the portions allotted to (c) husband or wife of the deceased and (d) collaterals The children's shares are fixed but their amount will depend upon what goes to the parents If both parents are living and there are also children both father and mother take a sixth each if only one parent is living he or she takes his or her sixth and the rest goes to the children If the parents are living and there is no child or other heir, the mother gets a third (and the father the remaining two thirds) if there are no children, but there are brothers or sisters (this is interpreted strictly in the plural) the mother has a sixth and the father apparently the residue as the father excludes collaterals This is far from being an exhaustive statement but it establishes the proposition that children and parents have always some share if they survive but their shares are affected by the existence and number of the heirs in these categories

By God, and God is  
All-knowing, All-wise

- 12 **¶**In what your wives leave,  
Your share is a half,  
If they leave no child,  
But if they leave a child,  
Ye get a fourth, after payment  
Of legacies and debts  
In what ye leave,  
Their share is a fourth,<sup>519</sup>  
If ye leave no child,  
But if ye leave a child,  
They get an eighth, after payment  
Of legacies and debts

**¶**If the man or woman  
Whose inheritance is in question,  
Has left neither ascendants nor  
descendants,<sup>520</sup>

But has left a brother<sup>521</sup>  
Or a sister, each one of the two  
Gets a sixth, but if more  
Than two, they share in a third,  
After payment of legacies  
And debts, so that no loss<sup>522</sup>  
Is caused (to any one)  
Thus is it ordained by God,  
And God is All-knowing,  
Most Forbearing

مِنَ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ۝

۱۲- وَلَكُمْ نِصْفُ مَا تَرَكَ أَزْوَاجُكُمْ  
إِنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُنَّ وَلَدٌ فَإِنْ كَانَ لَهُنَّ  
وَلَدٌ فَلَكُمْ الرُّبْعُ مِمَّا تَرَكَنَّ مِنْ بَعْدِ  
وَصِيَّةٍ يُوصِينَ بِهَا أَوْ دَيْنٍ  
وَلَهُنَّ الرُّبْعُ مِمَّا تَرَكَنَّ إِنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ لَكُمْ  
وَلَدٌ وَإِنْ كَانَ لَكُمْ وَلَدٌ فَلَهُنَّ  
الثُّلُثُ مِمَّا تَرَكَتُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ  
تُوصُونَ بِهَا أَوْ دَيْنٍ وَإِنْ كَانَ رَجُلٌ  
يُورِثُ كَلَّةً أَوْ امْرَأَةً وَكَهْ أُمَّ  
أَوْ أُخْتًا فَلِكُلِّ وَاحِدٍ مِمَّنَا الشُّدُسُ  
إِنْ كَانُوا أَكْثَرَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ فَهُمْ شُرَكَاءُ فِي  
الثُّلُثِ مِنْ بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ يُوصَى بِهَا أَوْ دَيْنٍ  
غَيْرِ مَصَافٍ وَصِيَّةٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَلِيمٌ

519 The husband takes a half of his deceased wife's property if she leaves no child, the rest going to residuaries if she leaves a child the husband gets only a fourth. Following the rule that the female share is generally half the male share the widow gets a fourth of her deceased husband's property if he leaves no children and an eighth if he leaves children. If there are more widows than one their collective share is a fourth or an eighth as the case may be *inter se* they divide equally.

520 The word in Arabic is *kalālat* which is so construed usually. But it was nowhere defined authoritatively in the lifetime of the Apostle. This was one of the three terms about which *Ḥaḍhrat* Umar wished that the Apostle had defined them in his lifetime the other two being *Khilāfat* and *ribā* (usury). On the accepted definition we are concerned with the inheritance of a person who has left no descendant or ascendant (however distant) but only collaterals with or without a widow or widower. If there is a widow or widower surviving she or he takes the share as already defined before the collaterals come in.

521 A 'brother or sister' is here interpreted to mean a uterine brother or sister i.e. a brother or sister by the same mother but not by the same father as the case of full brothers and sisters or brothers and sisters by the same father but different mothers is understood to be dealt with later in the last verse of this Sūra. The uterine brother or sister if only one survives takes a sixth if more than one survive they take a third collectively and divide among themselves, this on the supposition that there are no descendants or ascendants however remote. There may however be a widow or widower surviving she or he takes her or his share as already specified.

The shares of collaterals generally are calculated on a complicated system which cannot be described in a brief note. For these and the rules about Residuaries (*Aṣāba*) reference should be made to special legal treatises.

522. Debts (in which funeral expenses take first rank) and legacies are the first charge on the estate of a deceased person before distribution takes place. But equity and fair dealing should be observed in all matters, so that no one's interests are prejudiced. Thus funeral expenses should be reasonable, debts must be genuine and not reckless debts and the shares must be calculated with fairness.

- 13 ~~Those~~ **Those** are limits  
Set by God those who  
Obey God and His Apostle  
Will be admitted to Gardens  
With rivers flowing beneath,  
To abide therein (for ever)  
And that will be  
The Supreme achievement <sup>522 A</sup>

١٣- تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ  
وَرَسُولَهُ يُدْخِلْهُ حَتَّى  
تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ حُلِيِّمْ فِيهَا  
وَذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ ٥

- 14 But those who disobey  
God and His Apostle  
And transgress His limits  
Will be admitted  
To a Fire, to abide therein  
And they shall have  
A humiliating punishment

١٤- وَمَنْ يُعْصِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ  
وَيَتَعَدَّ حُدُودَهُ يُدْخِلْهُ نَارًا  
خَالِدًا فِيهَا  
وَلَهُ عَذَابٌ مُهِينٌ ٥

C 62 — What can be a holier cement to Society

- (iv 15—42) Than that women should be chaste and pure,  
And crimes against sex rooted out ?  
Let decency, kindness, and justice  
Prevail in all sex relationships,  
Let marriage be cherished and carefully guarded ;  
Women's rights secured, family jars  
Adjusted, and all life lived  
In faith, charity, and kindness sincere  
To all our fellow creatures

SECTION 3

- 15 If any of your women  
Are guilty of lewdness,<sup>523</sup>  
Take the evidence of four<sup>54</sup>  
(Reliable) witnesses from amongst  
you  
Against them, and if they testify,  
Confine them to houses until  
Death do claim them,

١٥- وَالَّتِي يَأْتِيَنَّ الْعَاجِزَةَ مِنْ بَسَائِكُمْ  
فَاسْتَشْهِدُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ أَرْبَعَةً مِّنْكُمْ  
وَأَنْ شَهِدُوا فَأَمْسِكُوهُنَّ فِي الْبُيُوتِ  
حَتَّى يَتَوَفَّيَهُنَّ الْمَوْتُ

522 A Cf xlv 57 n 4733 also App XII 15 p 1469

523 Most commentators understand this to refer to adultery or fornication in that case they consider that the punishment was altered to 100 stripes by the later verse xxiv 2 But I think it refers to unnatural crime between women analogous to unnatural crime between men in iv 16 below because (1) no punishment is specified here for the man as would be the case where a man was involved in the crime (2) the word *al-lati* the purely feminine plural of *al-lati* is used for the parties to the crime, (3) the punishment is indefinite, see the next note but one

524 To protect the honour of women, stricter evidence is required, i.e., the evidence of four instead of the usual two witnesses It is the same for adultery (see xxiv 4)

Or God ordain for them  
Some (other) way <sup>525</sup>

أَوْ يَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ لَهُنَّ سَبِيلًا ۝

- 16 If two men among you  
Are guilty of lewdness,  
Punish them both  
If they repent and amend,  
Leave them alone, for God  
Is Oft-returning, Most Merciful

١٦- وَالَّذِينَ يَأْتِيهِمَا مِنْكُمْ فَادُّوهُمَا  
وَإِنْ تَابَا وَأَصْلَحَا  
فَاعْرِضُوا عَنْهُمَا  
إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ تَوَّابًا رَحِيمًا ۝

- 17 God accepts the repentance  
Of those who do evil  
In ignorance and repent  
Soon afterwards, to them  
Will God turn in mercy  
For God is full of knowledge  
And wisdom

١٧- إِنْ شَاءَ التَّوْبَةُ عَلَى اللَّهِ  
لِلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ الشُّوْءَ رَجْعًا لَوْ  
شَاءَ تَوْبُونَ مِنْ قَرِيبٍ  
فَأُولَئِكَ يَتُوبُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ  
وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ۝

- 18 Of no effect is the repentance  
Of those who continue <sup>526</sup>  
To do evil, until Death  
Faces one of them, and he says,  
"Now have I repented indeed,"  
Nor of those who die  
Rejecting Faith for them  
Have we prepared  
A punishment most grievous

١٨- وَلَيْسَتْ التَّوْبَةُ لِلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ السَّيِّئَاتِ  
حَتَّىٰ إِذَا حَصَرَ أَحَدَهُمُ الْمَوْتُ  
قَالَ إِنِّي تُدْتُ الْفَنَ  
وَلَا الَّذِينَ يَسْتَوُونَ وَهُمْ مُقَاتِلُونَ  
أُولَئِكَ أَخْتِذُوا لَهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ۝

- 19 ﴿٢٥﴾ ye who believe!  
Ye are forbidden to inherit  
Women against their will <sup>527</sup>  
Nor should ye treat them

١٩- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا  
لَا يَحِلُّ لَكُمْ أَنْ تَرِثُوا النِّسَاءَ كَرِهًا  
وَلَا تَعْضُلُوهُنَّ

<sup>525</sup> Keep them in prison until some definite order is received Those who take the crime to be adultery or fornication construe this definite order ( 'some other way ' ) to mean some definite pronouncement by the Prophet under inspiration this was the punishment of flogging under xxiv 2 If we understand the crime to be unnatural crime we might presume in the absence of any definite order ( 'some other way ' ) that the punishment would be similar to that for men in the next verse That is itself indefinite and perhaps intentionally so as the crime is most shameful and should be unknown in a well regulated society The maximum punishment would of course be imprisonment for life

<sup>526</sup> Note the fine touch A sin may be fashionable and people may sin together without compunction When one of them is faced with Death he repents, but that sort of repentance is no good

<sup>527</sup> Among many nations including Arabs in the Days of Ignorance a step son or brother took possession of a dead man's widow or widows along with his goods and chattels This shameful custom is forbidden See also iv 22 below

With harshness, that ye may  
 Take away part of the dower<sup>528</sup>  
 Ye have given them,—except  
 Where they have been guilty  
 Of open lewdness,  
 On the contrary live with them  
 On a footing of kindness and  
 equity  
 If ye take a dislike to them  
 It may be that ye dislike  
 A thing, and God brings about  
 Through it a great deal of good

لِتَذْهَبُوا بِبَعْضِ  
 مَا آتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ  
 إِلَّا أَنْ يَأْبِينَ بِفَاحِشَةٍ مُبَيَّنَةٍ  
 وَعَايَتُهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ  
 فَإِنْ كَرِهْتُمُوهُنَّ  
 فَعَسَى أَنْ تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا  
 وَيَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ فِيهِ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا ۝

20 But if ye decide to take  
 One wife in place of another,  
 Even if ye had given the latter  
 A whole treasure<sup>529</sup> for dower,  
 Take not the least bit of it back  
 Would ye take it by slander  
 And a manifest wrong?

۲- وَإِنْ أَرَدْتُمْ اسْتِبْدَالَ زَوْجٍ مَكَانَ  
 زَوْجٍ ۚ وَآتَيْتُمْ إِحْدَاهُنَّ قِنْطَارًا  
 فَلَا تَأْخُذُوا مِنْهُ شَيْئًا  
 أَتَأْخُذُونَهُ بُهْتَانًا وَإِنْسَانًا مُبِينًا ۝

21 And how could ye take it  
 When ye have gone in  
 Unto each other, and they have  
 Taken from you a solemn  
 covenant?

۲۱- وَكَيْفَ تَأْخُذُونَهُ  
 وَقَدْ أَقْصَى بَعْضُكُمْ إِلَى بَعْضٍ  
 وَأُحْذِرُ مِنْكُمْ مُنْشَأً مَا عَلَيْكُمْ ۝

22 And marry not women  
 Whom your fathers married,—  
 Except what is past  
 It was shameful and odious,—  
 An abominable custom indeed<sup>530</sup>

۲۲- وَلَا تَنْكِحُوا مَا نَكَحَ آبَاؤُكُمْ مِنَ  
 النِّسَاءِ إِلَّا مَا قَدْ سَلَفُ  
 إِنَّهُ كَانَ فَاحِشَةً وَمَقْتًا وَسَاءَ سَبِيلًا ۝

528 Another trick to detract from the freedom of married women was to treat them badly and force them to sue for a *Kul* a divorce (see ii 229 n 258) or its equivalent in pre Islamic custom when the dower could be claimed back This is also forbidden Or the harshness may be exercised in another way a divorced woman may be prevented by those who have control of her from re marry ing unless she remits her dower All kinds of harshness are forbidden

529 Treasure *Qinfār*—a talent of gold see iii 14 first note

530 See above iv 19, n 527



- 24 Also (prohibited are)  
 Women already married,  
 Except those  
 Whom your right hands possess <sup>537</sup>  
 Thus hath God ordained  
 (Prohibitions) against you  
 Except for these, all others  
 Are lawful, provided  
 Ye seek (them in marriage)  
 With gifts from your property,—  
 Desiring chastity, not lust <sup>538</sup>  
 Seeing that ye derive  
 Benefit from them, give them  
 Their dowers (at least) <sup>539</sup>  
 As prescribed, but if,  
 After a dower is prescribed, ye  
 agree  
 Mutually (to vary it),  
 There is no blame on you,  
 And God is All knowing,  
 All wise

- 25 If any of you have not  
 The means wherewith  
 To wed free believing women,  
 They may wed believing  
 Girls from among those  
 Whom your right hands possess <sup>540</sup>  
 And God hath full knowledge  
 About your Faith  
 Ye are one from another  
 Wed them with the leave  
 Of their owners, and give them  
 Their dowers, according to what

وَالْمُحْصَنَاتُ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ  
 إِلَّا مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ  
 كَتَبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمْ  
 وَأُجَلَ لَكُمْ مِمَّا رَأَيْتُمْ  
 أَنْ تَتَّعُوا بِأَمْوَالِكُمْ  
 مُحْصِينَ عَدْرَ مُسْفِحِينَ  
 مِمَّا اسْتَمْتَعْتُمْ بِهِ مِنْهُنَّ  
 وَأَتَوْهُنَّ أُخُورَهُنَّ فَرِيصَةً  
 وَلَا حَرَجَ عَلَيْكُمْ  
 فِيمَا تَرَاضْتُمْ بِهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ الْفَرِيضَةِ  
 إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا  
 -r- وَمَنْ لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ مِنْكُمْ  
 طَوْلًا أَنْ يَنْكِحَ الْمُحْصَنَاتِ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ  
 فَمِنْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ  
 مِنْ فَتَنِكُمُ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ  
 وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِإِيمَانِكُمْ بَعْضُكُمْ مِنْ بَعْضٍ  
 فَانكِحُوهُنَّ بِأَدْرِ أَهْلِهِنَّ  
 وَأَتَوْهُنَّ أُخُورَهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ

537 Whom your right hands possess i.e. captives in a Jihād or war under the orders of the righteous Imām against those who persecute Faith. In such cases formal hostility dissolves civil ties.

538 After defining the prohibited degrees the verse proceeds to say that women other than those specified may be sought in marriage but even so not from motives of lust but in order to promote chastity between the sexes. Marriage in the original Arabic is here described by a word which suggests a fortress (ḥiṣn) marriage is therefore the fortress of chastity.

539 As the woman in marriage surrenders her person so the man also must surrender (besides some part of his independence) at least some of his property according to his means. And this gives rise to the law of Dower. A minimum dower is prescribed but it is not necessary to stick to the minimum and in the new relationship created the parties are recommended to act towards each other with the greatest confidence and liberality.

540 That is captives taken in a Jihād see note 537 above. Your right hands does not mean necessarily that she has been assigned to you or is your property. All captures in war belong to the community they are yours in that sense. If you seek such a person in marriage, do it from no base motives. Safeguard your faith and see that she too does believe. In that case after all, she is of the human brotherhood and her condition is accidental and redeemable. If the slave bore a child to her master, she would become free. The slave condition is now out of date in the true spirit of Islam. But there are other conditions in which a woman's (or man's) freedom is restricted, and the principle would apply there also.



Is reasonable they should be  
Chaste, not lustful, nor taking  
Paramours when they  
Are taken in wedlock,  
If they fall into shame,  
Their punishment is half  
That for free women  
This (permission) is for those  
Among you who fear sin,  
But it is better for you  
That ye practise self-restraint  
And God is Oft-forgiving,  
Most Merciful

## SECTION 5

- 26 God doth wish  
To make clear to you  
And to show you  
The ordinances of those  
Before you, and (He  
Doth wish to) turn to you  
(In Mercy) and God  
Is All-knowing, All-wise
- 27 God doth wish  
To turn to you,  
But the wish of those  
Who follow their lusts  
Is that ye should turn  
Away (from Him),—  
Far, far away
- 28 God doth wish  
To lighten your (difficulties)  
For man was created  
Weak (in flesh)
- 29 O ye who believe <sup>141</sup>  
Eat not up your property

مُحْصَنَاتٍ غَيْرِ مُسَفِّحَاتٍ  
وَلَا مُتَّحِدَاتٍ أَحْدَابٍ  
وَإِذَا أُحْصِنَ فَإِنْ أَتَيْنَ بِفَاحِشَةٍ  
فَعَلَيْهِنَّ يِصْفُ مَا عَلَى الْمُحْصَنَاتِ مِنَ  
الْعَذَابِ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ حَشَى الْعَتَمَتِ مِنْكُمْ  
وَأَنْ تَصْبِرُوا حَتَّى لَكُمْ  
وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ٥

٢٦- يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمُ  
رِيبَ الدِّينِ وَيَهْدِيَكُمْ سُبُلَ الدِّينِ  
وَيُخَوِّفَ عَنْكُمْ  
وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ٥

٢٧- وَاللَّهُ يُرِيدُ أَنْ يَتُوبَ عَلَيْكُمْ  
وَيُزِيلَ الدِّينَ  
يَتَّبِعُونَ الشَّهَوَاتِ  
أَنْ تَمْنَلُوا مِنْهَا عَظَمًا ٥

٢٨- يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ أَنْ يُخَفِّفَ عَنْكُمْ  
وَحُلُولَ الْإِنْسَانِ صَعْفًا ٥

٢٩- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَكُمْ

541 Let me paraphrase this verse for there is profound meaning in it (1) All your property you hold in trust whether it is in your name or belongs to the community or to people over whom you have control To waste is wrong (2) In 11 188 the same phrase occurred to caution us against greed Here it occurs to encourage us to increase property by economic use (traffic and trade) recalling Christ's parable of the Talents (Matt xxv 14 30) where the servants who had increased their master's wealth were promoted and the servant who had hoarded was cast into darkness. (3) We are warned that our waste may mean our own destruction (nor kill or destroy yourselves) But there is a more general meaning also we must be careful of our own and other people's lives. We must commit no violence This is the opposite of 'trade and traffic by mutual good will' (4) Our violence to our own brethren is particularly preposterous seeing that God has loved and showered His mercies on us and all His creatures

Among yourselves in vanities  
But let there be amongst you  
Traffic and trade  
By mutual good-will  
Nor kill (or destroy)  
Yourselves for verily  
God hath been to you  
Most Merciful !

30 If any do that  
In rancour and injustice,—  
Soon shall We cast them  
Into the Fire and easy  
It is for God

31 If ye (but) eschew  
The most heinous  
Of the things  
Which ye are forbidden to do,  
We shall expel  
Out of you  
All the evil in you,  
And admit you to a Gate  
Of great honour

32 And in no wise covet<sup>542</sup>  
Those things in which God  
Hath bestowed His gifts  
More freely on some of you  
Than on others to men  
Is allotted what they earn,  
And to women what they earn  
But ask God of His bounty  
For God hath full knowledge  
Of all things

33 To (benefit) every one,  
We have appointed  
Sharers and heirs<sup>543</sup>  
To property left

بَيْنَكُمْ بِالطَّائِلِ  
إِلَّا أَنْ تَكُونَ تِجَارَةً عَنْ رِأْسٍ مِنْكُمْ  
وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ  
إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِكُمْ رَحِيمًا ۝

۳- وَمَنْ تَعَلَّ ذَلِكَ عُدْوَانًا وَظُلْمًا  
فَسَوْفَ نُصِلُّهُ نَارًا  
وَكَانَ ذَلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرًا ۝

۳۱- إِنْ تَحْتَسِبُوا كَذَائِرَ  
مَا تُثْمِرُونَ عَنْهُ  
تُكَفِّرْ عَنْكُمْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ  
وَنُدْخِلَكُمْ مُدْخِلَ كَرِيمٍ ۝

۳۲- وَلَا تَتَمَنَّوْا مَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بِهِ نَعْصَكُمْ  
عَلَى نَعْصِ لِلرِّجَالِ نَصِيبٌ مِمَّا اكْتَسَبُوا  
وَلِلنِّسَاءِ نَصِيبٌ مِمَّا اكْتَسَبْنَ  
وَسْأَلُوا اللَّهَ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ  
إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمًا ۝

۳۳- وَ لِكُلِّ جَعَلْنَا مَوَالِي مِمَّا تَرَكَ  
الْوَالِدِينَ وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ

542 Men and women have gifts from God—some greater than others. They seem unequal but we are assured that Providence has allotted them by a scheme by which people receive what they earn. If this does not appear clear in our sight, let us remember that we have no full knowledge but God has. We must not be jealous if other people have more than we have—in wealth or position or strength or honour or talent or happiness. Probably things are equalized in the aggregate or in the long run or equated to needs and merits on a scale which we cannot appraise. If we want more instead of being jealous or covetous we should pray to God and place before Him our needs. Though He knows all and has no need of our prayer, our prayer may reveal to ourselves our shortcomings and enable us to deserve more of God's bounty or make ourselves fit for it.

543 *Mawālī* plural of *Mawālī*, from the root *walā* to be near in place or relationship to follow. *Mawālī* may therefore mean (1) nearly related (2) heir, (3) sharer or partner these three meanings are implied here, (4) neighbour, or friend, or protector or client (xliiv 44), (5) lord, or master (xvi 76).

By parents and relatives  
To those, also, to whom  
Your right hand was pledged,<sup>546</sup>  
Give their due portion  
For truly God is witness  
To all things

## SECTION 6

- 34 **Men** are the protectors<sup>545</sup>  
And maintainers of women,  
Because God has given  
The one more (strength)  
Than the other, and because  
They support them  
From their means  
Therefore the righteous women  
Are devoutly obedient, and guard  
In (the husband's) absence  
What God would have them  
guard<sup>546</sup>
- As to those women  
On whose part ye fear  
Disloyalty and ill-conduct,  
Admonish them (first),<sup>547</sup>  
(Next), refuse to share their beds,  
(And last) beat them (lightly),  
But if they return to obedience,  
Seek not against them<sup>548</sup>  
Means (of annoyance)

وَالَّذِينَ عَقَدْتَ أَسْمَانُكُمْ  
وَأَنفُسُهُمْ بَصْنَهُمْ<sup>ط</sup>  
إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدًا ۝

۲۴-الرِّحَالُ قَوَّامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ  
بِمَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ  
وَبِمَا آتَوْا مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ<sup>ط</sup>  
وَالصَّالِحَاتُ قَانِتَاتٌ حَافِظَاتٌ لِّلْغَيْبِ  
بِمَا حَفِظَ اللَّهُ<sup>ط</sup>  
وَاللَّيْنِ يُحَافِظُونَ سُورَهُنَّ بِعَظْمِهِنَّ  
وَالْحُجْرَتِ فِي الْمَصَاحِرِ  
وَاضْرِبُوهُنَّ<sup>ط</sup>  
فَإِنْ أَطَعْنَكُمْ  
فَلَا تَنْعَوْا عَلَيْهِنَّ سَبِيلًا<sup>ط</sup>

544 When the emigration took place from Mecca to Medina bonds and links of brotherhood were established between the Emigrants and the Helpers and they shared in each other's inheritance. Later when the Community was solidly established and relations with those left behind in Mecca were resumed the rights of blood relations in Mecca and the Helper brethren in Medina were both safeguarded. This is the particular meaning. The more general meaning is similar: respect your ties of blood of neighbourhood and of friendly compacts and understandings. Be just to all.

545 *Qawwām* one who stands firm in another's business protects his interests and looks after his affairs or it may be standing firm in his own business managing affairs with a steady purpose Cf iv 135

546 Or the sentence may be rendered and protect (the husband's interests) in his absence as God has protected them. If we take the rendering as in the text the meaning is the good wife is obedient and harmonious in her husband's presence and in his absence guards his reputation and property and her own virtue as ordained by God. If we take the rendering as in the note we reach the same result in a different way: the good wife in her husband's absence remembering how God has given her a sheltered position does everything to justify that position by guarding her own virtue and his reputation and property.

547 In case of family jars four steps are mentioned to be taken in that order: (1) perhaps verbal advice or admonition may be sufficient, (2) if not sex relations may be suspended, (3) if this is not sufficient some slight physical correction may be administered, but Imām Shafīʿi considers this inadvisable though permissible and all authorities are unanimous in deprecating any sort of cruelty even of the nagging kind as mentioned in the next clause, (4) if all this fails a family council is recommended in iv 35 below.

548 Temper nagging sarcasm speaking at each other in other people's presence reverting to past faults which should be forgiven and forgotten—all this is forbidden. And the reason given is characteristic of Islam: You must live all your life as in the presence of God Who is high above us but Who watches over us. How petty and contemptible will our little squabbles appear in His presence!

For God is Most High,  
Great (above you all)

إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا كَبِيرًا ۝

- 35 If ye fear a breach  
Between them twain,  
Appoint (two) arbiters,  
One from his family,  
And the other from hers ; <sup>549</sup>  
If they wish for peace,  
God will cause  
Their reconciliation  
For God hath full knowledge,  
And is acquainted  
With all things

۳۵- وَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ سِقَاقَ نَدِيمٍ  
فَاتَّعِظُوا حَكَمًا مِّنْ أَهْلِهِ  
وَحَكَمًا مِّنْ أَهْلِهَا ۚ  
إِنْ تُرِيدُوا إِصْلَاحًا  
يُؤَقِّقِ اللَّهُ بَنَّهُمَا ۚ  
إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ۝

- 36 Serve God, and join not <sup>550</sup>  
Any partners with Him ,  
And do good—  
To parents, kinsfolk,  
Orphans, those in need,  
Neighbours who are near, <sup>551</sup>  
Neighbours who are strangers,  
The Companion by your side, <sup>552</sup>  
The way-farer (ye meet),  
And what your right hands <sup>553</sup>  
possess

۳۶- وَاعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَلَا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا  
وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا  
وَبِذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالسَّكِينِ  
وَالْحَارِ دِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْحَارِ الْحَبِ  
وَالصَّاحِبِ بِالْحَبِ وَأَسِ السَّبِيلِ ۚ  
وَمِمَّا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ ۚ

For God loveth not  
The arrogant, the vainglorious ,— <sup>554</sup>

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ مَن كَانَ مُخَالًا فَخُورًا ۝

<sup>549</sup> An excellent plan for settling family disputes without too much publicity or mud throwing or resort to the chicaneries of the law. The Muslim countries recognise this plan in their legal systems. It is a pity that Muslims do not resort to it universally as they should. The arbiters from each family would know the idiosyncracies of both parties and would be able with God's help to effect a real reconciliation.

<sup>550</sup> The essence of Islam is to serve God and do good to your fellow creatures. This is wider and more comprehensive than 'Love God and love your neighbour'. For it includes duties to animals as our fellow creatures and emphasises practical service rather than sentiment.

<sup>551</sup> Neighbours who are near: that is in local situation as well as intimate relationships just as neighbours who are strangers includes those whom we do not know or who live away from us or in a different sphere altogether.

<sup>552</sup> The Companion by your side may be your intimate friends and associates just as the way farer you meet may be a casual acquaintance on your travels. This last is much wider than the stranger within your gate.

<sup>553</sup> What your right hands possess: anything that has no civil rights. It includes captives or slaves (where they exist in any form whatever) people in your power or dumb animals with whom you have to deal. They are all God's creatures and deserve our sympathy and our practical service. Cf. Coleridge's *Rime of the Ancient Mariner*. He prayeth best who loveth best. All things both great and small, I or the dear God who loveth us. He made and loveth all.

<sup>554</sup> Real deeds of service and kindness proceed not from showing off or from a superior sort of condescension (Cf. *White Man's Burden*) but from a frank recognition of our own humility and the real claims before God, of all our fellow creatures. For in our mutual needs we are equal before God or perhaps the best of us (as the world sees us) may be worse than the worst of us (from the same point of view).

37 (Nor) those who are niggardly  
Or enjoin niggardliness on others,  
Or hide the bounties  
Which God hath bestowed<sup>555</sup>  
On them, for We have prepared,  
For those who resist Faith,  
A Punishment that steeps<sup>556</sup>  
Them in contempt, —

38 Nor those who spend  
Of their substance, to be seen<sup>557</sup>  
Of men, but have no faith  
In God and the Last Day  
If any take the Evil One  
For their intimate,  
What a dreadful intimate he is !

39 And what burden  
Were it on them if they  
Had faith in God  
And in the Last Day,  
And they spent  
Out of what God hath  
Given them for sustenance ?<sup>558</sup>  
For God hath full  
Knowledge of them

40 God is never unjust  
In the least degree  
If there is any good (done),  
He doubleth it,  
And giveth from His own  
Presence a great reward<sup>559</sup>

41 How then if We brought  
From each People a witness,

٣٧- الَّذِينَ يَخْتَلُونَ  
وَبِأَمْوَالِ النَّاسِ بِالْخُلْ  
وَيَكْتُمُونَ مَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ  
وَأَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابًا مُهِينًا ۝

٣٨- وَالَّذِينَ يُبْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ رِئَاءَ النَّاسِ  
وَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَلَا بِالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ  
وَمَنْ يَكُنِ الشَّيْطَانُ لَهُ قَرِينًا فَسَاءَ  
قَرِينًا ۝

٣٩- وَمَا دَا عَلَىٰ هُمْ لَوْ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ  
وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ  
وَأَنْفَعُوا مِمَّا رَزَقَهُمُ اللَّهُ  
وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِهِمْ عَلِيمًا ۝

٤٠- إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا تَظْلِمُ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ  
وَإِنْ تَكُ حَسَنَةً قَدْ تُصِغِفَهَا  
وَيُؤْتِ مِنْ لَدُنْهِ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ۝

٤١- فَكَذَّبُوا إِذَا احْتَنَاهُمْ مِنْ كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ بِشَهِيدٍ

555 Arrogance is one reason why our deeds of love and kindness do not thrive. Another is niggardliness or selfishness. God does not love either the one or the other for they both proceed from want of love of God or faith in God. Niggardly is the worldly wise man who not only refuses to spend himself in service but by example and precept prevents others from doing so as otherwise he would be made odious by comparison before his fellow creatures. So he either makes a virtue of his caution or hides the gifts which have been given him—wealth, position, talent etc.

556 Note how the punishment fits the crime. The niggard holds other people in contempt and in doing so, becomes himself contemptible.

557 A fault opposed to niggardliness and equally opposed to true Charity is to spend lavishly to be seen of men. It is mere hypocrisy, there is no love in it either for God or for man.

558 Sustenance physical, intellectual, spiritual—everything pertaining to life and growth. Our being is from God and we must therefore spend ourselves freely for God. How can it be a burden? It is merely a response to the demand of our own healthy nature.

559 Any little good of our own comes from the purity of our heart. Its results in the world are doubled and multiplied by God's grace and mercy, but an even greater reward comes from His own Presence, His good pleasure which brings us nearer to Him.

And We brought thee  
As a witness against  
These People !<sup>560</sup>

- 42 On that day  
Those who reject Faith  
And disobey the Apostle  
Will wish that the earth  
Were made one with them <sup>561</sup>  
But never will they hide  
A single fact from God !

وَحِجَّتْنَا بِكَ عَلَى هَؤُلَاءِ شَهِيدًا ۝

۴۲- يَوْمَئِذٍ يَوَدُّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا  
وَعَصُوا الرُّسُولَ  
لَوْ سُئِيَ بِهِمُ الْأَرْضُ  
وَلَا يَكْتُمُونَ اللَّهَ حَدِيثًا ۝

وقف الذي عليه السلام  
١٥٤

C 63 — Be clean and pure, and seek not occasions  
(iv 43 70) For quibbles, nor go after sorcery  
Or false gods Be faithful  
In your trusts, learn obedience,  
And settle your quarrels under the guidance  
Of God's Apostle Ever keep away  
From hypocrisy and every kind of falsehood  
Then will you be admitted to a glorious Fellowship  
With the highest and noblest in the spiritual world

### SECTION 7

- 43 ⑤ ye who believe !  
Approach not prayers  
With a mind befogged,<sup>562</sup>  
Until ye can understand  
All that ye say,—  
Nor in a state  
Of ceremonial impurity  
(Except when travelling on the  
road),  
Until after washing  
Your whole body  
If ye are ill,  
Or on a journey,  
Or one of you cometh  
From offices of nature,

۴۳- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَقْرَبُوا الصَّلَاةَ  
وَأَنْتُمْ سُكَرَى  
حَتَّى تَعْلَمُوا مَا تَقُولُونَ  
وَلَا جُنُبًا إِلَّا عَابِرِي سَبِيلٍ  
حَتَّى تَغْتَسِلُوا وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ مَرْضَى  
أَوْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ  
أَوْ جَاءَ أَحَدٌ مِنْكُم مِّنَ الْغَائِطِ

560 Each Prophet and Leader is a witness for his People and his contemporaries—for those who accept God and against those who reject Him

561 Those who reject God's message will wish when their eyes are opened that they were reduced to dust for existence itself will be agony to them They might like to hide in the dust but nothing is hidden from God All their past will stand out clear before Him

562 The reference is either to a state of intoxication or to a dazed state of mind on account of drowsiness or some other cause Or perhaps both are implied Before the prohibition of intoxicants altogether was promulgated it was at least unbecoming that people should come to prayers in such a state For prayers it is only right that we should collect our whole minds and approach God in a spirit of reverence 'Prayers (Ṣalāt) here may mean 'a place of prayers' a Mosque the resulting meaning would be the same

Or ye have been  
In contact with women,  
And ye find no water,<sup>563</sup>  
Then take for yourselves  
Clean sand or earth,  
And rub therewith  
Your faces and hands  
For God doth blot out sins  
And forgive again and again

أَوَلَسْتُمْ النِّسَاءَ

فَلَمْ تَحْدُوا مَاءً

فَتَمَسُّوا صَعِدًا طَيِّبًا

وَأَمْسَحُوا بِوُجُوهِكُمْ وَأَيْدِيكُمْ

إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَفُورًا ۝

- 44 **Has** thou not turned  
Thy vision to those  
Who were given a portion<sup>564</sup>  
Of the Book? They traffic  
In error, and wish that ye  
Should lose the right path

۝-۴۴ أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا نَصِيبًا مِّنَ

الْكِتَابِ سَتَرُوا عَلَىٰ

وَيْرِيدُونَ أَنْ تَصِلُوا السَّبِيلَ ۝

- 45 But God hath full knowledge  
Of your enemies  
God is enough for a Protector,  
And God is enough for a Helper

۝-۴۵ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِأَعْدَائِكُمْ

وَكُفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ وَلِيًّا ۖ وَكُفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ نَصِيرًا ۝

- 46 Of the Jews there are those  
Who displace words  
From their (right) places,  
And say "We hear  
And we disobey",<sup>565</sup>  
And "Hear what is not  
Heard", and "*Rā'inā*",<sup>566</sup>  
With a twist of their tongues  
And a slander to Faith  
If only they had said  
"We hear and we obey",  
And "Do hear",

۝-۴۶ مِنَ الَّذِينَ هَادُوا يُخَوِّنُونَ الْكَلِمَ

عَنْ مَوَاصِعِهِ

وَيَقُولُونَ سَمِعْنَا وَعَصَيْنَا

وَأَنصِتْهُمْ ۖ وَرَاعِنَا لَتَّابِ أَلْسِنَتِهِمْ

وَطَعْنًا فِي الدِّينِ ۖ وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا سَمِعْنَا

وَأَطَعْنَا وَأَنصِتْ

563 The strictest cleanliness and purity of mind and body are required especially at the time of prayer. But there are circumstances when water for ablutions is not easily obtainable especially in the dry conditions of Arabia and then washing with dry sand or clean earth is recommended. Four such circumstances are mentioned: the two last when washing is specially required; the two first when washing may be necessary but it may not be easy to get water. For a man when he is ill cannot walk out far to get water and a man on a journey has no full control over his supplies. In all four cases where water cannot be got cleaning with dry sand or dry earth is recommended. This is called *layammum*.

564 Cf. iii 23 and n 366

565 See ii 93 n 98. A trick of the Jews was to twist words and expressions so as to ridicule the most solemn teachings of Faith. Where they should have said "We hear and we obey" they said aloud "We hear and whispered" "We disobey". Where they should have said respectfully, "We hear" they added in a whisper "What is not heard" by way of ridicule. Where they claimed the attention of the Teacher they used an ambiguous word apparently harmless but in their intention disrespectful.

566 See ii 104 n 106. "*Rā'inā*" if used respectfully in the Arabic way would have meant "Please attend to us." With a twist of their tongue they suggested an insulting meaning such as "O thou that takest us to pasture!" or in Hebrew, "Our bad one!"

And " Do look at us "  
It would have been better  
For them, and more proper ,  
But God hath cursed them  
For their Unbelief , and but few  
Of them will believe

وَانْظُرْنَا لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ وَأَقْوَمًا  
وَلَكِنْ لَعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ  
بِكُفْرِهِمْ فَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا

- 47 **Ye** People of the Book !  
Believe in what We  
Have (now) revealed, confirming  
What was (already) with you,  
Before We change the face and  
fame <sup>567</sup>  
Of some (of you) beyond all  
recognition,  
And turn them hindwards,  
Or curse them as We cursed  
The Sabbath-breakers, <sup>568</sup>  
For the decision of God  
Must be carried out

۴۷- يٰٓأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ آمِنُوا  
بِمَا نَزَّلْنَا مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا مَعَكُمْ  
مِّن قَبْلِ أَنْ تَطْغَىٰ وُجُوهُكُمْ  
فَرُدَّهَا عَلَىٰ أَدْبَارِهَا  
أَوْ نَلْعَنَهُمْ كَمَا لَعَنَّا أَصْحَابَ السَّبْتِ  
وَكَانَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ مَفْعُولًا

- 48 God forgiveth not  
That partners should be set up  
With Him , but He forgiveth  
Anything else, to whom  
He pleaseth , to set up  
Partners with God  
Is to devise a sin <sup>569</sup>  
Most heinous indeed

۴۸- إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ  
وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ  
وَمَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ  
فَقَدْ افْتَرَىٰ إِثْمًا عَظِيمًا

- 49 **Has** thou not turned  
Thy vision to those  
Who claim sanctity  
For themselves ? <sup>570</sup>

۴۹- أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ  
يَزُكُّونَ أَنْفُسَهُمْ

567 Literally before We obliterate some features (or faces) and turn them front to back (or back to front) an Arabic idiom which must be translated freely to yield its proper meaning in English The face is the chief expression of a man's own real essence it is also the index of his fame and estimation The People of the Book had been specially favoured by God with spiritual revelations If they proved themselves unworthy they lost their face Their eminence would owing to their own conduct be turned into degradation Others would take their place The first shall be last and the last shall be first Matt xix 30

568 Cf ii 65 and n 79

569 Just as in an earthly kingdom the worst crime is that of treason as it cuts at the very existence of the State so in the spiritual kingdom the unforgivable sin is that of contumacious treason against God by putting up God's creatures in rivalry against Him This is rebellion against the essence and source of spiritual Life It is what Plato would call the lie in the soul But even here if the rebellion is through ignorance and is followed by sincere repentance and amendment God's Mercy is always open (iv 17)

570 The sanctimonious or self sanctified people are the farthest from sanctity or purity, which can only proceed from God They cannot play with God's Truth and yet go on claiming to be guided and purified or justified by God Their falsehood in itself condemns them no further proof is needed of their selfishness and evil



Nay—but God  
Doth sanctify  
Whom He pleaseth  
But never will they  
Fail to receive justice  
In the least little thing <sup>571</sup>

بَلِ اللّٰهُ يُزَكِّي مَن يَّشَاءُ  
وَلَا يُظْلَمُونَ فَتِيلًا ۝

50 Behold! how they invent  
A lie against God!  
But that by itself  
Is a manifest sin!

٥٠- اُنْظُرْ كَيْفَ يَفْتَرُونَ عَلَى اللّٰهِ الْكَذِبَ  
وَكَفَىٰ بِهِ اِتِّمًا مِّسْنًا ۝

SECTION 8

51 ~~In~~ hast thou not turned  
Thy vision to those  
Who were given a portion <sup>572</sup>  
Of the Book? They believe  
In Sorcery and Evil, <sup>573</sup>  
And say to the Unbelievers  
That they are better guided  
In the (right) way  
Than the Believers!

٥١- اَلَمْ تَرَ اِلَى الَّذِيْنَ اُوْتُوا نَصِيْبًا مِّنَ  
الْكِتٰبِ  
يُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِالْحُبَّتِ وَالطَّاعُوْتِ  
وَيَقُوْلُوْنَ لِلَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا هٰؤُلَاءِ  
اَهْدٰى مِنَ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا سَبِيْلًا ۝

52 They are (men) whom  
God hath cursed  
And those whom God  
Hath cursed, thou wilt find,  
Have no one to help <sup>574</sup>

٥٢- اُولٰٓئِكَ الَّذِيْنَ لَعَنَهُمُ اللّٰهُ  
وَمَنْ يَلْعَنُ اللّٰهُ  
فَلَنْ تَجِدَ لَهُ نَصِيْرًا ۝

53 Have they a share  
In dominion or power?  
Behold, they give not a farthing <sup>575</sup>  
To their fellow-men?

٥٣- اَمْ لَهُمْ نَصِيْبٌ مِّنَ الْمُلْكِ  
فَاِذَا لَا يُؤْنُوْنَ النَّاسَ نَقِيْرًا ۝

571 Literally the small skin in the groove of a date stone, a thing of no value *qa'il*

572 Cf. iii. 23 and n. 366 The phrase also occurs in iv. 44

573 The word I have translated *Sorcery* is *jibt* which may mean divination, sorcery, magic or any false object of belief or worship such as an idol. The word I have translated *Evil* (here and in ii. 256) is *Tāgūt* which means the evil one, the one who exceeds all bounds, Satan, or it may refer to some idol worshipped by the Pagan Arabs with whom the Jews of Medina were intriguing against the Holy Apostle. The Jews had taken much to sorcery, magic, divination and such superstitions.

574 The Jews were then seeking the aid of the Meccan Pagans against Muhammad, but so far from getting any help from them they and the Pagans were both overthrown. That was the immediate occasion, but the words have a perfectly general—a universal—meaning.

575 The word I have translated *farthing* is *naqir* the groove in a date stone, a thing of no value whatever. Close fisteness and envy are among the worst forms of selfishness and appear specially incongruous in people of power, authority or influence, from whom is expected generosity in giving and generosity in seeing other people's prosperity or happiness.

54 Or do they envy mankind  
For what God hath given them  
Of his bounty? But We  
Had already given the people  
Of Abraham the Book  
And Wisdom, and conferred  
Upon them a great kingdom <sup>576</sup>

55 Some of them believed,  
And some of them averted  
Their faces from him and enough  
Is Hell for a burning fire <sup>577</sup>

56 Those who reject  
Our Signs, We shall soon  
Cast into the Fire  
As often as their skins  
Are roasted through,  
We shall change them  
For fresh skins,  
That they may taste  
The Penalty for God  
Is Exalted in Power, Wise

57 But those who believe  
And do deeds of righteousness,  
We shall soon admit to Gardens,  
With rivers flowing beneath,—  
Their eternal home  
Therein shall they have  
Companions pure and holy <sup>578</sup>  
We shall admit them  
To shades, cool and ever  
deepening <sup>579</sup>

58 God doth command you  
To render back your Trusts  
To those to whom they are due,  
And when ye judge

٥٣- أَمْ يَحْسُدُونَ النَّاسَ  
عَلَىٰ مَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ  
فَقَدْ آتَيْنَا آلَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ الْكِتَابَ  
وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَآتَيْنَاهُمْ مُلْكًا عَظِيمًا ۝

٥٥- فَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ آمَنَ بِهِ وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ  
صَدَّ عَنْهُ ۚ وَكَفَىٰ بِجَهَنَّمَ سَعِيرًا ۝

٥٦- إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِآيَاتِنَا  
سَوْفَ نُصْلِيهِمْ نَارًا  
كُلَّمَا تَضَيَّجَتْ جُلُودُهُمْ بَدَّلْنَاهُمْ جُلُودًا  
غَيْرَهَا لِيَذُوقُوا الْعَذَابَ ۚ  
إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا ۝

٥٧- وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ  
سَنُدْخِلُهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرَى  
مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا  
لَهُمْ فِيهَا أَرْوَاجٌ مُطَهَّرَةٌ  
وَنُدْخِلُهُمْ ظِلًّا ظَلِيلًا ۝

٥٨- إِنَّ اللَّهَ نَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تُؤَدُّوا الْأَمَانَاتِ  
إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهَا وَإِذَا حَكَمْتُمْ

576 Such as the kingdoms of David and Solomon for they had international fame

577 Envy is like an internal fire, which is in itself a hell

578 Cf. ii 25 and n 44

579 The Garden is contrasted with the Fire the shade is contrasted with the roasting Evil grows with what it feeds on So goodness and felicity grow with their practice The good may be alone to start with but (unlike evil ones) they get holy Companions Just as spiritual agony increases with what it suffers (typified by fresh skins growing as the old ones burn out) so spiritual felicity finds deeper and deeper meaning (typified by the shades in a Garden, which grow deeper and cooler as you proceed into the interior)

Between man and man,  
That ye judge with justice  
Verily how excellent  
Is the teaching which He giveth  
you!  
For God is He Who heareth  
And seeth all things

بَيْنَ النَّاسِ  
أَنْ تَحْكُمُوا بِالْعَدْلِ  
إِنَّ اللَّهَ نِعِمَّا يَعِظُكُمْ بِهِ  
إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا

- 59 O ye who believe !  
Obey God, and obey the Apostle,  
And those charged  
With authority among you <sup>580</sup>  
If ye differ in anything  
Among yourselves, refer it  
To God and His Apostle,  
If ye do believe in God  
And the Last Day  
That is best, and most suitable  
For final determination

٥٩- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا  
أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ  
مِنْكُمْ فَإِنْ تَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ  
فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ  
إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ  
فَإِنَّ ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا ۝

#### SECTION 9

- 60 **It**ast thou not turned  
Thy vision to those <sup>581</sup>  
Who declare that they believe  
In the revelations  
That have come to thee  
And to those before thee ?  
Their (real) wish is  
To resort together for judgment  
(In their disputes)  
To the Evil One,  
Though they were ordered  
To reject him  
But Satan's wish  
Is to lead them astray  
Far away (from the Right)

٦٠- أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ  
يَزْعُمُونَ أَنَّهُمْ آمَنُوا بِمَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْكَ  
وَمَا أُنْزِلَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ  
يُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يُتَحَاكَمُوا  
إِلَى الطَّاغُوتِ  
وَقَدْ أُمِرُوا أَنْ يَكْفُرُوا بِهِ  
وَيُرِيدُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَنْ يُضِلَّهُمْ  
ضَلَالًا  
بَعِيدًا ۝

- 61 When it is said to them  
" Come to what God hath revealed,

٦١- وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ تَعَالَوْا إِلَى مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ

580 *Ulū l amr*—those charged with authority or responsibility or decision or the settlement of affairs. All ultimate authority rests in God. Men of God derive their authority from Him. As Islam makes no sharp division between sacred and secular affairs it expects ordinary governments to be imbued with righteousness and stand in the place of the righteous Imam and we must respect and obey such authority, otherwise there will be no order or discipline. Where in actual fact there is a sharp division between law and morality between secular and religious affairs as is the case in most countries at the present day Islam still expects secular authority to be exercised in righteousness, and on that condition enjoins obedience to such authority.

581. The immediate reference was to the Hypocrites (*Munāfiqīn*) of Medina, but the words are general and the evil of hypocrisy has to be dealt with in all ages. The type of these men is what is called Mr Facing both ways in Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress". Such men declare that they are always with the Right but calmly intrigue with Evil and Injustice and even make Injustice their judge if their personal interests are served in that way.

And to the Apostle "

Thou seest the Hypocrites avert  
Their faces from thee in disgust

- 62 How then, when they are  
Seized by misfortune,  
Because of the deeds  
Which their hands have sent forth?  
Then they come to thee,  
Swearing by God  
"We meant no more  
Than good-will and conciliation!"

- 63 Those men,—God knows  
What is in their hearts,  
So keep clear of them,<sup>582</sup>  
But admonish them,  
And speak to them a word  
To reach their very souls

- 64 We sent not an Apostle,  
But to be obeyed, in accordance  
With the Will of God.  
If they had only,  
When they were unjust  
To themselves,  
Come unto thee  
And asked God's forgiveness,  
And the Apostle had asked  
Forgiveness for them,  
They would have found  
God indeed Oft-returning,  
Most Merciful

- 65 But no, by thy Lord,  
They can have  
No (real) Faith,  
Until they make thee judge  
In all disputes between them,  
And find in their souls  
No resistance against  
Thy decisions, but accept  
Them with the fullest conviction<sup>583</sup>

وَالِى الرَّسُولِ رَأَيْتَ الْمُنَافِقِينَ يَصُدُّونَ  
عَنْكَ صُدُودًا ۝

٦٢- فَكَيْفَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُمْ مُصِيبَةٌ  
بِمَا قَدْ مَتَّ أَيْدِيَهُمْ  
ثُمَّ جَاءُوكَ يَحْلِفُونَ ۖ  
بِاللَّهِ إِنَّ أَرْدْنَاكَ لَأَإِحْسَانًا ۖ وَتَوَاقَا ۝

٦٣- أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُ اللَّهُ مَا فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ  
فَأَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ وَعِظْهُمْ  
وَقُلْ لَهُمْ فِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ قَوْلًا بَلِيغًا ۝

٦٤- وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ رَّسُولٍ  
إِلَّا لِيُطَاعَ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ ۖ  
وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ إِذْ ظَلَمُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ  
جَاءُوكَ فَاسْتَغْفَرُوا اللَّهَ  
وَاسْتَغْفَرَ لَهُمُ الرَّسُولُ  
لَوَجَدُوا اللَّهَ تَوَّابًا رَحِيمًا ۝

٦٥- فَلَا وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ  
حَتَّى يُحْكُمَوكَ فِي مَا شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ  
ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُوا فِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ  
حَرَجًا مِمَّا قَضَيْتَ وَيُسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا ۝

<sup>582</sup> How should hypocrites be treated? To take them into your confidence would of course be foolish. To wage unrelenting war against them may destroy the hope of reforming them and purging them of their hypocrisy. The man of God keeps clear of their wiles, but at the same time does not hesitate to show them the error of their ways, nor to put in a word in season to penetrate their hearts and win them back to God.

<sup>583</sup> The test of true Faith is not mere lip profession but bringing all our doubts and disputes to the one in whom we profess faith. Further when a decision is given we are not only to accept it, but find in our inmost souls no difficulty and no resistance, but on the contrary a joyful acceptance springing from the conviction of our own faith.

66 If We had ordered them  
To sacrifice their lives  
Or to leave their homes,  
Very few of them  
Would have done it <sup>584</sup>  
But if they had done  
What they were (actually) told,  
It would have been best  
For them, and would have gone  
Farthest to strengthen their (faith),

٦٦- وَلَوْ أَنَّا كَتَبْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ أَنْ اقْتُلُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ  
أَوْ اخْرُجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِكُمْ  
مَا فَعَلُوهُ إِلَّا قَلِيلٌ مِنْهُمْ  
وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ فَعَلُوا مَا يُوعَظُونَ بِهِ  
لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ وَأَشَدَّ تَثْبِيثًا ۝

67 And We should then have  
Given them from Our Presence  
A great reward ,

٦٧- وَإِذَا لَا تَجِدُهُمْ  
مِنْ لَدُنَّا أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ۝

68 And We should have  
Shown them the Straight Way <sup>585</sup>

٦٨- وَلَهَدَيْنَاهُمْ صِرَاطًا مُسْتَقِيمًا ۝

69 All who obey God  
And the Apostle  
Are in the company  
Of those on whom  
Is the Grace of God,—  
Of the Prophets (who teach),  
The Sincere (lovers of Truth),  
The Witnesses (who testify),  
And the Righteous (who do good)  
Ah ! what a beautiful Fellowship ! <sup>586</sup>

٦٩- وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ  
 فَأُولَٰئِكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ  
 مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَالصِّدِّيقِينَ  
 وَالشُّهَدَاءِ وَالصَّالِحِينَ  
 وَحَسُنَ أُولَٰئِكَ رَفِيقًا ۝

584 The highest in faith willingly sacrifice their lives their homes and all that they hold dearest in the cause of God. Those whose faith is not so strong are expected at least to do what a loyal member of any society does submit his doubts and disputes to the head of the society and cheerfully accept his decision and submit to it. The contrast is between the Hypocrites who will not even do this, and the really devoted men and women who would voluntarily sacrifice their lives.

585 Four advantages of obedience to God are mentioned in the order in which they will appeal to the beginner in faith (1) his own benefit ( best for them ) (2) strengthening of his faith as he becomes more and more at home in the spiritual world (3) reward from God's own Presence such intense conviction that no further arguments are needed, (4) the Straight Way, in which there is no doubt or difficulty whatever in our practical conduct.

586 A passage of the deepest spiritual meaning. Even the humblest man who accepts Faith and does good becomes at once an accepted member of a great and beautiful spiritual Fellowship. It is a company which lives perpetually in the sunshine of God's Grace. (This passage partly illustrates Q 15). It is a glorious hierarchy, of which four grades are specified (1) The highest is that of the Prophets or Apostles who get plenary inspiration from God and who teach mankind by example and precept. That rank in Islam is held by Muhammad Mustafā. (2) The next are those whose badge is sincerity and truth, they love and support the truth with their person; then means their influence and all that is theirs. That rank was held by the special Companions of Muhammad among whom the type was that of Hadrat Abū Bakr Siddiq. (3) The next are the noble army of Witnesses, who testify to the truth. The testimony may be by martyrdom as in the case of Imams Hasan and Husain. Or it may be by the tongue of the true Preacher or the pen of the devoted scholar or the life of the man devoted to service. (4) Lastly, there is the large company of Righteous people the ordinary folk who do their ordinary business, but always in a righteous way. They are the rank and file of the beautiful Fellowship, in which each has his place and yet all feel that they derive glory from the common association.

- 70 Such is the Bounty  
From God and sufficient  
Is it that God knoweth all,<sup>587</sup>

هٰذَا الْفَضْلُ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ عَلِيمًا ۝

C 64 —Keep together in your noble Brotherhood  
(iv 71 91) Share its joys and sorrows strive  
And fight the good fight, and never fear  
For this life is short, and the Hereafter  
Eternal Allow not yourselves to be drawn  
Into unbelief and cowardice  
Maintain the Right Protect yourselves  
Against Hypocrites and Deserters,  
But pursue them not unrelentingly

### SECTION 10

- 71 ۞ ye who believe !  
Take your precautions,  
And either go forth in parties  
Or go forth all together<sup>588</sup>

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا حُذِرُوا وَاحِدَكُمْ  
فَاغْرُؤْا ثُبَاتٍ أَوْ الْغُرُؤْا جَمِيعًا ۝

- 72 There are certainly among you  
Men who would tarry behind<sup>589</sup>  
If a misfortune befalls you,  
They say " God did favour us  
In that we were not  
Present among them "

وَأِنَّ مِنْكُمْ لَمَنْ لَيُبَطِّئَنَّ  
فَإِنْ أَصَابَكُمْ مُصِيبَةٌ قَالَ قَدْ أَنْعَمَ  
اللَّهُ عَلَيَّ إِذْ لَمْ أَكُنْ مَعَهُمْ شَهِيدًا ۝

- 73 But if good fortune comes to you  
From God, they would be sure  
To say—as if there had never been  
Ties of affection between you  
and them—  
" Oh ! I wish I had been with them,  
A fine thing should I then  
Have made of it ! " <sup>590</sup>

وَلَئِنْ أَصَابَكُمْ فَضْلٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ  
لَيَقُولَنَّ كَأَنْ لَمْ تَكُنْ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُ  
مَوَدَّةٌ يَلَيْتَنِي كُنْتُ مَعَهُمْ  
فَأَفُوزَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا ۝

587 If a generous General gives the private soldier the privilege of sitting with his comrades and officers high and low in one common Brotherhood people may perhaps wonder how may this be? If we are admitted to that Fellowship we want to know no more It is enough to us that God knows our humility and our unworthiness, and with His full knowledge admits us to that glorious Fellowship !

588 No fight should be undertaken without due preparations and precautions When these are taken we must go boldly forward Go forth is therefore repeated for emphasis But we must go forth in a collective spirit and not in a selfish spirit—either in small parties or all together as our Leader determines We must not tarry like the doubter in the next two verses

589 The doubter detaches himself in thought and action from the community If the general body has a reverse he blesses God that he was not among them instead of being ashamed of himself for desertion If the general body wins a success he does not rejoice for the common cause but only regrets for himself that he was not there to share in the glory and the gains !

590 Just a selfish man's thought Such men are far from being a source of strength to their community They are no use in a fight, and the next verse by implication discards them

- 74 **Inter**et those fight  
In the cause of God  
Who sell the life of this world  
For the Hereafter<sup>591</sup>  
To him who fighteth  
In the cause of God,—  
Whether he is slain  
Or gets victory—  
Soon shall We give him  
A reward of great (value)

٢٤- فليقاتل في سبيل الله  
الذين يشترُونَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا بِالْآخِرَةِ  
وَمَنْ يُقَاتِلْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ  
فَيُقْتَلْ أَوْ يَغْلِبْ  
فَسَوْفَ نُؤْتِيَهُ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ۝

- 75 And why should ye not  
Fight in the cause of God  
And of those who, being weak,<sup>592</sup>  
Are ill-treated (and oppressed)?—  
Men, women, and children,  
Whose cry is "Our Lord!  
Rescue us from this town,  
Whose people are oppressors,  
And raise for us from Thee  
One who will protect,  
And raise for us from Thee  
One who will help!"<sup>593</sup>

٥٥- وَمَا لَكُمْ لَا تُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ  
وَالْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ وَالنِّسَاءِ وَالْوِلْدَانِ الَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا أَخْرِجْنَا مِنْ  
هَذِهِ الْقَرْيَةِ الظَّالِمِ أَهْلُهَا  
وَاجْعَلْ لَنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ وَلِيًّا  
وَاجْعَلْ لَنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ نَصِيرًا ۝

- 76 Those who believe  
Fight in the cause of God,  
And those who reject Faith  
Fight in the cause of Evil  
So fight ye against the  
Friends<sup>594</sup> of Satan feeble indeed  
Is the cunning of Satan

٤٦- الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ  
وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ  
الظَّالِمِينَ فقاتِلُوا أَوْلِيَاءَ الشَّيْطَانِ  
إِنَّ كَيْدَ الشَّيْطَانِ كَانَ ضَعِيفًا ۝

#### SECTION 11

- 77 **En**st thou not turned  
Thy vision to those

٤٤- أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ

591 It is not every one—least of all poltroons and faint hearted persons—who is fit to fight in the cause of God. To do so is a privilege, and those who understand the privilege are prepared to sacrifice all their interests in this life and this life itself for the sake of something everlasting and of immense value. Whether (in appearance) they win or lose in reality they win the prize for which they are fighting—viz. honour and glory in the sight of God. Note that the only alternatives here are Death or Victory! The true fighter knows no defeat.

592 *Mustaḍʿaf* = one reckoned weak, and therefore ill treated and oppressed Cf iv 98, and vii 150.

593 Even from the human point of view the cause of God is the cause of justice the cause of the oppressed. In the great persecution before Mecca was won again what sorrows, threats, tortures and oppressions were suffered by those whose faith was unshaken? Muhammad's life and that of his adherents was threatened they were mocked, assaulted, insulted and beaten, those within the power of the enemy were put into chains and cast into prison, others were boycotted and shut out of trade business and social intercourse, they could not even buy the food they wanted or perform their religious duties. The persecution was redoubled for the believing slaves, women and children after the Hijrat. Their cry for a protector and helper from God was answered when Muhammad the Chosen One brought freedom and peace to Mecca again.

594 *Auliya* plural of *wali*, friend, supporter, protector, patron, from the same root as *mauli* for which see iv 33, n 543.

Who were told to hold back <sup>595</sup>  
 Their hands (from fight)  
 But establish regular prayers  
 And spend in regular Charity ?  
 When (at length) the order  
 For fighting was issued to them,  
 Behold ! a section of them  
 Feared men as—  
 Or even more than—  
 They should have feared God  
 They said " Our Lord !  
 Why hast Thou ordered us  
 To fight ? Wouldst Thou not  
 Grant us respite  
 To our (natural) term, <sup>596</sup>  
 Near (enough) ? " Say " Short  
 Is the enjoyment of this world  
 The Hereafter is the best  
 For those who do right  
 Never will ye be  
 Dealt with unjustly  
 In the very least !

قِيلَ لَهُمْ كَفَؤْا أَيُّدِيكُمْ  
 وَاقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ  
 فَلَمَّا كَتَبَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقِتَالُ إِذَا فَرِيقٌ مِنْهُمْ  
 يَخْشَوْنَ النَّاسَ كَخَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ  
 أَوْ أَشَدَّ خَشْيَةً  
 وَقَالُوا رَبَّنَا لِمَ كَتَبْتَ  
 عَلَيْنَا الْقِتَالَ  
 لَوْلَا أَخَّرْتَنَا إِلَى أَجَلٍ قَرِيبٍ  
 قُلْ مَتَاعُ الدُّنْيَا قَلِيلٌ  
 وَالْآخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ لِمَنِ اتَّقَى  
 وَلَا تَظْلَمُونَ فَتِيلًا ٥

78 " Wherever ye are,  
 Death will find you out,  
 Even if ye are in towers  
 Built up strong and high ! "

If some good befalls them,  
 They say, " This is from God ",  
 But if evil, they say,  
 " This is from thee " (O Prophet) <sup>597</sup>

٤٨- أَيْنَ مَا تَكُونُوا يَدْرِكْكُمُ الْمَوْتُ وَلَوْ كُنْتُمْ  
 فِي بُرُوجٍ مُشْبَدَّةٍ وَإِنْ تُصِبْهُمْ حَسَنَةٌ  
 يَقُولُوا هَذِهِ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ  
 وَإِنْ تُصِبْهُمْ سَيِّئَةٌ  
 يَقُولُوا هَذِهِ مِنْ عِنْدِكَ

<sup>595</sup> Before the command for fighting was issued there were some who were impatient and could scarcely be held back. They wanted fighting from human motives—pugnacity the love of plunder hatred against their enemies the gaining of personal ends. Fighting from such motives is wrong at all times. When the testing time came and they had to fight not for their own hand but for a Sacred Cause in which there was much suffering and little personal gain the Hypocrites held back and were afraid.

<sup>596</sup> ' Our natural term of life they would say is short enough why should we jeopardize it by fighting in which there is no personal gain ? ' The answer is begun in this verse and continued in the next.

Briefly the answer is (1) in any case the pleasures of this world are short this life is fleeting the first thing for a righteous man to do is to emancipate himself from its obsessions (2) to do your duty is to do right therefore turn your attention mainly to duty, (3) when duty calls for self sacrifice be sure that God's call is never unjust and never such as to exceed your capacity and (4) if you fear death you will not by fear escape death it will find you out wherever you are why not face it boldly when duty calls ?

<sup>597</sup> The Hypocrites were inconsistent and in this reflect unregenerate mankind. If a disaster happens due to their own folly they blame somebody else but if they are fortunate they claim reflected credit by pretending that Heaven has favoured them because of their own superior merits. The modern critic discards even this pretence eliminates Heaven altogether, and claims all credit direct to himself unless he brings in blind Chance but that he does mostly to explain misfortune. If we look to the ultimate Cause of all things all things come from God. But if we look to the proximate cause of things our own merit is so small, that we can hardly claim credit for good ourselves with any fairness. In God's hand is all good in 26. On the other hand, the proximate cause of our evil is due to some wrong in our own inner selves, for never are we dealt with unjustly in the very least iv 77



Say "All things are from God"  
But what hath come  
To these people,  
That they fail  
To understand  
A single fact?

قُلْ كُلٌّ مِّنْ عِندِ اللَّهِ  
فَمَالِ هَؤُلَاءِ الْقَوْمِ  
لَا يَكَادُونَ يَفْقَهُونَ حَدِيثًا ٥

79 Whatever good, (O man!)  
Happens to thee is from God,  
But whatever evil happens  
To thee, is from thy (own) soul  
And We have sent thee  
As an Apostle<sup>598</sup>  
To (instruct) mankind  
And enough is God  
For a witness

٤٩- مَا أَصَابَكَ مِنْ حَسَنَةٍ فَمِنَ اللَّهِ  
وَمَا أَصَابَكَ مِنْ سَيِّئَةٍ فَمِنْ نَفْسِكَ  
وَأَرْسَلْنَاكَ لِلنَّاسِ رَسُولًا  
وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا ٥

80 He who obeys  
The Apostle, obeys God  
But if any turn away,  
We have not sent thee  
To watch over  
Their (evil deeds)<sup>599</sup>

٨٠- مَنْ يُطِيعِ الرَّسُولَ فَقَدْ أَطَاعَ اللَّهَ  
وَمَنْ تَوَلَّى  
فَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ عَلَيْهِمْ حَفِظًا ٥

81 They have "Obedience"  
On their lips, but  
When they leave thee,  
A section of them  
Meditate all night  
On things very different  
From what thou tellest them  
But God records  
Their nightly (plots)  
So keep clear of them,  
And put thy trust in God,  
And enough is God

٨١- وَيَقُولُونَ طَاعَةٌ  
فَإِذَا بَرَزُوا مِنْ عِندِكَ خَالَفُوا  
غَيْرَ الَّذِي تَقُولُ  
وَاللَّهُ يَكْتُبُ مَا يُبَيِّنُونَ  
فَاعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ  
وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ

598 To blame a man of God for our misfortunes is doubly unjust. For he comes to save us from misfortune and it is because we flout him or pay no heed to him that our own rebellion brings its own punishment. If we realise this truth we shall be saved from two sins: (1) the sin of injustice to God's Messengers, who come for our good and not for our harm; (2) the sin of not realising our own shortcomings or rebellion and thus living in spiritual darkness. If the Message is from God, that carries its own authority, enough is God for a witness.

599 The Apostle was sent to preach, guide, instruct, and show the Way—not to drive people to good, or to detect all that was evil. That is not God's Plan, which trains the human Will. The Apostle's duty is therefore to convey the Message of God in all the ways of persuasion that are open to him. If men perversely disobey that Message they are not disobeying him but they are disobeying God. In the same way those who obey the Message are obeying God. They are not obliging the Messenger; they are merely doing their duty.

As a disposer of affairs <sup>600</sup>

- 82 Do they not consider  
The Qur-ān (with care)?  
Had it been from other  
Than God, they would surely  
Have found therein  
Much discrepancy <sup>601</sup>

وَكُفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ وَكِيلًا ۝  
۸۲- أَفَلَا يَتَذَكَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ ۚ  
وَلَوْ كَانَ مِنْ عِنْدِ غَيْرِ اللَّهِ  
لَوَجَدُوا فِيهِ اخْتِلَافًا كَثِيرًا ۝

- 83 When there comes to them  
Some matter touching  
(Public) safety or fear,  
They divulge it  
If they had only referred it  
To the Apostle, or to those  
Charged with authority  
Among them, the proper  
Investigators would have  
Tested it from them (direct)  
Were it not for the Grace  
And Mercy of God unto you,  
All but a few of you  
Would have fallen  
Into the clutches of Satan <sup>602</sup>

۸۳- وَإِذَا جَاءَهُمْ  
أَمْرٌ مِنَ الْأَمْنِ أَوِ الْخَوْفِ أَذَاعُوا بِهِ  
وَلَوْ رُدُّوهُ إِلَى الرَّسُولِ  
وَأِلَىٰ أُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْهُمْ  
لَعَلِمَهُ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَنْبِطُونَهُ مِنْهُمْ ۚ  
وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ  
لَاسْتَعْتَمَّ الشَّيْطَانُ إِلَّا فُلْيَا ۝

- 84 When fight in God's cause—  
Thou art held responsible  
Only for thyself—  
And rouse the Believers  
It may be that God  
Will restrain the fury

۸۴- فَقَاتِلْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ  
لَا تُكَلِّفُ إِلَّا نَفْسَكَ وَخَرِّصِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ  
عَسَى اللَّهُ أَنْ يَكْفِكَ نَاسٌ

600 If we trust to people who are not true they are more likely to hinder than to help. But God is All good as well as All powerful and all our affairs are best entrusted to His care. He is the best Guardian of all interests.

Therefore we should not trust the lip professions of Hypocrites but trust in God. Nor should our confidence in God be shaken by any secret plots that enemies hatch against us. We should take all human precautions against them but having done so we should put our trust in God. Who knows the inner working of events better than any human mind can conceive.

601 The unity of the Qur-ān is admittedly greater than that of any other sacred book. And yet how can we account for it except through the unity of God's purpose and design? From a mere human point of view we should have expected much discrepancy because (1) the Messenger who promulgated it was not a learned man or philosopher (2) it was promulgated at various times and in various circumstances and (3) it is addressed to all grades of mankind. Yet when properly understood its various pieces fit together better than a jig saw puzzle even when arranged without any regard to chronological order. There was just the One Inspirer and the One Inspired.

602 In times of war or public panic thoughtless repetition of gossip is rightly restrained by all effective States. If false such news may cause needless alarm if true it may frighten the timid and cause some misgivings even to the bravest because the counterpart of it—the preparations made to meet the danger—is not known. Thoughtless news, true or false may also encourage the enemy. The proper course is quietly to hand all news direct to those who are in a position to investigate it. They can then sift it and take suitable measures to checkmate the enemy. Not to do so, but to deal with news either thoughtlessly or maliciously is to fall directly into the snares of Evil.

Of the Unbelievers,  
For God is the strongest  
In might and in punishment <sup>603</sup>

- 85 Whoever recommends  
And helps a good cause  
Becomes a partner therein  
And whoever recommends  
And helps an evil cause,  
Shares in its burden  
And God hath power <sup>604</sup>  
Over all things

- 86 **W**hen a (courteous) greeting  
Is offered you, meet it  
With a greeting still more  
Courteous, or (at least)  
Of equal courtesy  
God takes careful account <sup>605</sup>  
Of all things

87. God! There is no god  
But He of a surety  
He will gather you together  
Against the Day of Judgment,  
About which there is no doubt  
And whose word can be  
Truer than God's?

## SECTION 12

- 88 **W**hy should ye be  
Divided into two parties

الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا ط  
وَاللَّهُ أَشَدُّ نَاسًا وَأَشَدُّ تَنكِيلًا ٥

٨٥- مَنْ يَشْفَعْ شَفَاعَةً حَسَنَةً يَكُنْ لَهُ  
نَصِيبٌ مِّنْهَا وَمَنْ تَشْفَعْ شَفَاعَةً سَيِّئَةً  
يَكُنْ لَهُ كِفْلٌ مِّنْهَا ط  
وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ مُّقْبِلًا ٥

٨٦- وَإِذَا حُيِّيتُمْ بِتَحِيَّةٍ  
فَحَيُّوْا بِأَحْسَنِ مِنْهَا  
أَوْ رُدُّوْهَا ط  
إِنِ اللَّهُ كَانَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ حَسِيبًا ٥

٨٧- اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ط  
لَيَجْمَعَنَّكُمْ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْعَمَّةِ  
لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ ط  
وَمَنْ أَضْدَقُ مِنَ اللَّهِ حَدِيثًا ٥

٨٨- فَمَا لَكُمْ فِي الْمُفِقِينَ فِئَتَيْنِ

<sup>603</sup> The courage of Muhammad was as noble as his wisdom, his gentleness, and his trust in God. Facing fearful odds, he often stood alone and took the whole responsibility on himself. But his example and visible trust in God inspired and roused the Muslims, and also—speaking purely from a human point of view—restrained the fury of his enemies. When we consider that he was God's inspired Messenger to carry out His Plan, we can see that nothing can resist that Plan. If the enemy happens to have strength, power, or resources, God's strength, power, and resources are infinitely greater. If the enemy is meditating punishment on the righteous for their righteousness, God's punishment for such wickedness will be infinitely greater and more effective.

<sup>604</sup> In this fleeting world's chances, God's providence and justice may not always appear plain to our eyes. But we are asked to believe that if we help and support a good cause, we share in all its credit and in its eventual victory. And conversely, we cannot support a bad cause without sharing in all its evil consequences. If appearances seem against this faith, let us not be deceived by appearances. For God has power over all things.

<sup>605</sup> The necessary correlative to the command to fight in a good cause is the command to cultivate sweetness and cordiality in our manners at all times. For fighting is an exceptional necessity, while the sweetness of daily human intercourse is a normal need. Further, we give kindness and courtesy without asking, and return it if possible in even better terms than we received, or at least in equally courteous terms. For we are all creatures of One God, and shall be brought together before Him.

About the Hypocrites ?<sup>606</sup>  
 God hath upset them  
 For their (evil) deeds  
 Would ye guide those  
 Whom God hath thrown  
 Out of the Way ? For those  
 Whom God hath thrown  
 Out of the Way, never  
 Shalt thou find the Way

وَاللّٰهُ اَرْكَسَهُمْ بِمَا كَسَبُوْا  
 اَتُرِيْدُونَ اَنْ تَهْدُوْا مَنْ اَضَلَّ اللّٰهُ  
 وَمَنْ يُّضِلِلِ اللّٰهُ  
 فَلَنْ تَجِدَ لَهُ سَبِيْلًا

89 They but wish that ye  
 Should reject Faith,  
 As they do, and thus be  
 On the same footing (as they)  
 But take not friends  
 From their ranks  
 Until they flee<sup>607</sup>  
 In the way of God  
 (From what is forbidden)  
 But if they turn renegades,  
 Seize them and slay them  
 Wherever ye find them,  
 And (in any case) take  
 No friends or helpers  
 From their ranks,—

۸۹-وَدُّواْ لَوْ تَكْفُرُوْنَ كَمَا كَفَرُوْا  
 فَتَكُوْنُوْنَ سَوَآءٍ  
 فَلَا يَخِذُّوْا مِنْهُمْ اَوْ لِبَآءٍ  
 حَتّٰى يَخْرُجُوْا فِى سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ  
 فَاِنْ تَوَلَّوْا  
 فَخُذُوْهُمْ وَاقتُلُوْهُمْ حَتّٰى وَحَدِّمُوْهُمْ  
 وَلَا تَخِذُوْا مِنْهُمْ وَلِئَا وَّلَا يَصِيْرُوْا

90 Except those who join  
 A group between whom  
 And you there is a treaty<sup>608</sup>

۹۰-اِلَّا الَّذِيْنَ يَصِلُوْنَ اِلٰى قَوْمٍ بَيْنَهُمْ  
 وَبَيْنَكُمْ مِّمْنًا

606 When the desertion of the Hypocrites at Uhud nearly caused a disaster to the Muslim cause there was great feeling among the Muslims of Medina against them. One party wanted to put them to the sword another to leave them alone. The actual policy pursued avoided both extremes and was determined by these verses. It was clear that they were a danger to the Muslim community if they were admitted into its councils and in any case they were a source of demoralisation. But while every caution was used no extreme measures were taken against them. On the contrary they were given a chance of making good. If they made a sacrifice for the cause (flee from what is forbidden—see next verse) their conduct purged their previous cowardice and their sincerity entitled them to be taken back. But if they deserted the Muslim community again they were treated as enemies with the additional penalty of desertion which is enforced by all nations actually at war. Even so a humane exception was made in the two cases specified in iv 90.

607 *I lee* the verbal form from which the noun *hijrat* is derived. Bukhari interprets this rightly as fleeing from all that is forbidden. This would include hijrat in the technical sense of leaving a place in which the practice of religion is not allowed. But it is more general. In time of war if a man is willing to submit to discipline and refrain from infringing orders issued he has proved his fidelity and may be treated as a member of the community at war.

On the other hand if he by false pretences comes into the inner councils merely to betray them he may rightly be treated as a traitor or deserter and be punished for his treason or desertion or if he escapes he can be treated as an enemy and is entitled to no mercy. He is worse than an enemy he has claimed to be of you in order to spy on you and been all the time helping the enemy.

608 *I except* the exception refers to seize them and slay them the death penalty for repeated desertion. Even after such desertion exemption is granted in two cases. One is where the deserter took asylum with a tribe with whom there was a treaty of peace and amity. Presumably such a tribe (even though outside the pale of Islam) might be trusted to keep the man from fighting against the forces of Islam—in the modern phrase to disarm him and render him harmless. The second case for exemption is where the man from his own heart desires never to take up arms against Islam though he does not wish to join the forces of Islam to fight against a hostile tribe (perhaps his own) fighting against Islam. But he must make a real approach giving guarantees of his sincerity. In the modern phrase he would be on parole. But this provision is much milder than that in modern military codes which grant the privilege only to enemy prisoners not to those who have deserted from the army granting them parole. The Hypocrites were in that position, but humanity as well as policy treated them with great leniency.

(Of peace), or those who approach<sup>609</sup>  
 You with hearts restraining  
 Them from fighting you  
 As well as fighting their own  
 People If God had pleased,  
 He could have given them  
 Power over you, and they  
 Would have fought you  
 Therefore if they withdraw  
 From you but fight you not,  
 And (instead) send you  
 (Guarantees of) peace, then God  
 Hath opened no way  
 For you (to war against them)

91. Others you will find  
 That wish to gain  
 Your confidence as well  
 As that of their people  
 Every time they are sent back<sup>610</sup>  
 To temptation, they succumb  
 Thereto if they withdraw not  
 From you nor give you (guarantees)  
 Of peace besides  
 Restraining their hands,  
 Seize them and slay them  
 Wherever ye get them  
 In their case  
 We have provided you  
 With a clear argument  
 Against them

أَوْ جَاءُوكُمْ حَصْرَتْ صُدُورُهُمْ  
 أَنْ يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ أَوْ يُقَاتِلُوا قَوْمَهُمْ  
 وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَسَلَّطَهُمْ عَلَيْكُمْ فَلَقَاتَلُوكُمْ  
 فَإِنْ اعْتَذَلُوكُمْ  
 فَلَمْ يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ  
 وَالْقُوا إِلَيْكُمُ السَّلَامَ  
 فَمَا جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ سَبِيلًا

٩١- سَتَجِدُونَ أَخْرَيْنَ  
 بُرِّدُونَ أَنْ يَأْمَنُوكُمْ وَيَأْمَنُوا قَوْمَهُمْ  
 كُلَّمَا رُزِّقُوا إِلَى الْفِتْنَةِ أُرْكَسُوا فِيهَا  
 فَإِنْ لَمْ يَعْتَزِلُوكُمْ  
 وَيُلْقُوا إِلَيْكُمُ السَّلَامَ وَيَكْفُرُوا أَيْدِيَهُمْ  
 فَخُذُوهُمْ وَاقْتُلُوهُمْ حَيْثُ ثَقِفْتُمُوهُمْ  
 وَأُولَئِكَ جَعَلْنَا لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ سُلْطَانًا  
 مُبِينًا

C 65 —The lives of those who believe  
 (iv 92 104) Are sacred if one is slain  
 By mistake, full compensation  
 Should be made Nor should  
 A stranger, even in time of war,  
 Be treated as an enemy, without

609 Approach or come refers not to the physical act of coming but to the mental attitude the heart is mentioned for sincerity When they sincerely promise not to fight against you do not pursue them Remember that if they had fought against you your difficulties would have been increased Their neutrality itself may be a great advantage to you So long as you are satisfied that they are sincere and their acts support their declarations of peace with you you should not consider yourself justified in pursuing them and warring against them

610 As opposed to the two classes of deserters to whom clemency may be shown there is a class which is treacherous and dangerous and cannot be left alone They try to win your confidence and are all the time in the confidence of the enemy Every time they get a chance, they succumb to the temptation of double dealing The best way of dealing with them is to treat them as open enemies Keep them not in your midst If they give you guarantees of peace and do not actually fight against you well and good If not they are deserters actively fighting in the ranks of the enemy They have openly given you proof, and you can fairly seize and slay them in war as deserters and enemies.

The fullest investigation    Live not  
In places hostile to Islam,  
If ye are able to migrate,—  
And spacious is God's earth  
Devotion and prayer may be  
Shortened in times of danger  
Take every precaution for safety,  
But be bold and undaunted in fight

## SECTION 13

- 92 **N**ever should a Believer  
Kill a Believer, but  
(If it so happens) by mistake,<sup>611</sup>  
(Compensation is due)  
If one (so) kills a Believer,  
It is ordained that he  
Should free a believing slave,  
And pay compensation  
To the deceased's family,  
Unless they remit it freely  
If the deceased belonged  
To a people at war with you,  
And he was a Believer,  
The freeing of a believing slave  
(Is enough) If he belonged  
To a people with whom  
Ye have a treaty of mutual  
Alliance, compensation should  
Be paid to his family,  
And a believing slave be freed  
For those who find this  
Beyond their means, (is prescribed)  
A fast for two months  
Running by way of repentance  
To God for God hath  
All knowledge and all wisdom

٩٢- وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ أَنْ يَقْتُلَ مُؤْمِنًا  
إِلَّا خَطَاً وَمَنْ قَتَلَ مُؤْمِنًا  
خَطَاً فَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مُؤْمِنَةٍ  
وَدِيَّةٌ مُسَلَّمَةٌ إِلَى أَهْلِهِ  
إِلَّا أَنْ يَصَّدَّقُوا  
وَإِنْ كَانَ مِنْ قَوْمٍ عَدُوٍّ لَكُمْ  
وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مُؤْمِنَةٍ  
وَإِنْ كَانَ مِنْ قَوْمٍ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُمْ  
مِيثَاقٌ فَدِيَّةٌ مُسَلَّمَةٌ إِلَى أَهْلِهِ  
وَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مُؤْمِنَةٍ  
مَنْ لَمْ يَجِدْ  
فَصِيَامُ شَهْرَيْنِ مُتَتَابِعَيْنِ تَوَّةً مِنَ اللَّهِ  
وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا

611 Life is absolutely sacred in the Islamic Brotherhood. But mistakes will sometimes happen, as did happen in the *mêlée* at Uhud when some Muslims were killed (being mistaken for the enemy) by Muslims. There was no guilty intention therefore there was no murder. But all the same the family of the deceased was entitled to compensation unless they freely remitted it, and in addition it was provided that the unfortunate man who made the mistake should free a believing slave. Thus a deplorable mistake was made the occasion for winning the liberty of a slave who was a Believer for Islam discountenances slavery. The compensation could only be paid if the deceased belonged to a Muslim society or to some people at peace with the Muslim society. Obviously it could not be paid if though the deceased was a Believer his people were at war with the Muslim society even if his people could be reached it is not fair to increase the resources of the enemy. If the deceased was himself an enemy at war obviously the laws of war justify his being killed in warfare unless he surrendered. If the man who took life unintentionally has no means from which to free a believing slave or to give compensation he must still by an act of strict self denial (fasting for two whole months running) show that he is cognizant of the grave nature of the deed he has done and sincerely repentant. I take this to apply to all three cases mentioned that is where a Believer killed a Believer unintentionally and the deceased (1) belonged to the same community as you, or (2) belonged to a community at war with you, or (3) belonged to a community in alliance with you.

93 If a man kills a Believer  
Intentionally, his recompense <sup>612</sup>  
Is Hell, to abide therein  
(For ever) and the wrath  
And the curse of God  
Are upon him, and  
A dreadful penalty  
Is prepared for him

94 **O** ye who believe!  
When ye go abroad <sup>613</sup>  
In the cause of God,  
Investigate carefully,  
And say not to any one  
Who offers you a salutation  
"Thou art none of a Believer!"—  
Coveting the perishable goods  
Of this life with God  
Are profits and spoils abundant  
Even thus were ye yourselves  
Before, till God conferred  
On you His favours therefore  
Carefully investigate  
For God is well aware  
Of all that ye do

95 **N**ot equal are those  
Believers who sit (at home)  
And receive no hurt,  
And those who strive  
And fight in the cause  
Of God with their goods  
And their persons  
God hath granted  
A grade higher to those  
Who strive and fight

٩٣- وَمَنْ يَفْتُلْ مُؤْمِنًا مُتَعَدًّا  
فَحَرَّاءُ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدًا فِيهَا  
وَعُذِّبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَلَعْنَهُ  
وَأَعَدَّ لَهُ عَذَابًا عَظِيمًا ۝

٩٤- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا صَرْتُمْ فِي  
سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَتَبَيَّنُوا وَلَا تَقُولُوا  
لِمَنْ أَلْقَى إِلَيْكُمُ السَّلَامَ لَسْتَ مُؤْمِنًا  
تَتَّبِعُونَ عَرَصَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا  
فَعِنْدَ اللَّهِ مَعَارِمٌ كَثِيرَةٌ  
كَذَلِكَ كُنْتُمْ مِنْ قَبْلُ  
فَمَنْ اللَّهُ عِنْدَكُمْ فَتَبَيَّنُوا  
إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا ۝

٩٥- لَا يَسْتَوِي الْفَاعِلُونَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ  
عَزِيزُ أُولَى الظَّرَرِ وَالْمُجَاهِدُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ  
اللَّهِ بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ  
فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ الْمُجَاهِدِينَ  
بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ

612 What is mentioned here is the punishment in the Hereafter the spiritual consequences. The legal consequences enforceable by human society are mentioned in 11 178 under the rules of *Qisas*. That is a life should be taken for a life destroyed but this should be on a scale of equality a single murder should not commit a whole tribe to a perpetual blood feud as in the days of ignorance. But if the heirs of the man slain accept reasonable compensation, this should be accepted and the taking of a life for a life should be put a stop to. This course leads to the saving of life and is commanded to men of understanding.

613 Go abroad *dharaba* = to travel to go abroad either for *jihad* or for honest trade or other service which if done with pure motives counts as service in the cause of God. The immediate occasion was in connection with *jihad* but the words are general and can be applied to all circumstances in which a man falls through spiritual pride he thinks he is not as other men are but forgets that but for the grace of God he is himself a sinner! In war (or in peace) we are apt to catch some worldly advantage by pluming ourselves on our superiority in Faith. In war perhaps we want to gain glory or booty by killing a supposed enemy! In peace we make light of other people in order to steal some advantage or material gain! This is wrong. The righteous man if he is really out in God's service, has more abundant and richer gifts to think of in the spiritual world.

With their goods and persons  
Than to those who sit (at home)  
Unto all (in Faith)<sup>614</sup>  
Hath God promised good  
But those who strive and fight  
Hath He distinguished  
Above those who sit (at home)  
By a special reward,—

عَلَى الْقُعَيْدِينَ دَرَجَةٌ ط  
وَكَلًّا وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الْحُسَنَى ط  
وَفَضَّلَ اللَّهُ الْمُجَاهِدِينَ  
عَلَى الْقُعَيْدِينَ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ٥

- 96 Ranks specially bestowed  
By Him, and Forgiveness  
And Mercy For God is  
Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful

٩٦- دَرَجَاتٍ مِّنْهُ وَمَعْفَرَةٌ وَرَحْمَةٌ  
وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا ٥

#### SECTION 14

- 97 ~~W~~hen angels take  
The souls of those  
Who die in sin  
Against their souls,<sup>615</sup>  
They say "In what (plight)  
Were ye?" They reply  
"Weak and oppressed  
Were we in the earth"  
They say "Was not  
The earth of God  
Spacious enough for you  
To move yourselves away  
(From evil)?" Such men  
Will find their abode  
In Hell,—What an evil  
Refuge!—

٩٧- إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لِرَبِّهِ لَكَنَ كَفِيرٌ  
ظَالِمِينَ أَنْفُسِهِمْ  
قَالُوا وَيَمَنُ كُنْتُمْ  
قَالُوا كُنَّا مُسْتَضْعَفِينَ فِي الْأَرْضِ  
قَالُوا أَلَمْ تَكُنْ أَرْضُ اللَّهِ وَاسِعَةً  
فَتَهَاجَرُوا فِيهَا  
قَالُوا لَيْسَ مَا وَلَّيْنَاكَ مَا وَلَّيْنَاكَ  
وَسَاءَتْ مَصِيرًا ٥

614 God's goodness is promised to all people of Faith. But there are degrees among men and women of Faith. There are people with natural inertia: they do the minimum that is required of them but no more. There are people who are weak in will: they are easily frightened. There are people who are so strong in will and so firm in faith that they are determined to conquer every obstacle, whether in their own physical or other infirmities or in the external world around them. In a time of *jihad* when people give their all and even their lives for the common cause, they must be accounted more glorious than those who sit at home even though they have good will to the cause and carry out minor duties in aid. The special reward of such self-sacrifice is high spiritual rank, and special forgiveness and mercy, as proceeding from the direct approbation and love of God.

615 The immediate occasion for this passage was the question of migration (*hijrat*) from places where Islam was being persecuted and suppressed. Obviously the duty of Muslims was to leave such places, even if it involved forsaking their homes and join and strengthen the Muslim community among whom they could live in peace and with whom they could help in fighting the evils around them. But the meaning is wider. Islam does not say 'Resist not evil'. On the contrary it requires a constant, unceasing struggle against evil. For such struggle it may be necessary to forsake home and unite and organise and join our brethren in assaulting and overthrowing the fortress of evil. For the Muslims' duty is not only to enjoin good but to prohibit evil. To make our assault we must be prepared to put ourselves in a position from which such assault would be possible, and God's earth is spacious enough for the purpose. 'Position' includes not only local position, but moral and material position. For example, we must shun evil company where we cannot put it down, but organise a position from which we can put it down.



- 98 Except those who are  
(Really) weak and oppressed—  
Men, women, and children—  
Who have no means  
In their power, nor (a guide-post)<sup>616</sup>  
To direct their way
- 99 For these, there is hope  
That God will forgive  
For God doth blot out (sins)  
And forgive again and again
- 100 He who forsakes his home  
In the cause of God,  
Finds in the earth  
Many a refuge,  
Wide and spacious  
Should he die  
As a refugee from home  
For God and His Apostle,  
His reward becomes due  
And sure with God  
And God is Oft forgiving,  
Most Merciful
- 101 **W**hen ye travel  
Through the earth,  
There is no blame on you  
If ye shorten your prayers,<sup>617</sup>  
For fear the Unbelievers  
May attack you  
For the Unbelievers are  
Unto you open enemies
- ٩٨- إِلَّا الْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ وَالْإِثْمَاءِ وَالْوِلْدَانِ لَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ حِيلَةً وَلَا يَهْتَدُونَ سَبِيلًا ۝
- ٩٩- فَأُولَٰئِكَ عَسَى اللَّهُ أَنْ يَعْفُو عَنْهُمْ ۖ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَفْوًا غَفُورًا ۝
- ١٠٠- وَمَنْ يُهَاجِرْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ يَجِدْ فِي الْأَرْضِ مُرْعًا كَثِيرًا وَسَعَةً ۖ وَمَنْ يُخْرِجْ مِنْ بَيْتِهِ مُهَاجِرًا إِلَى اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ ثُمَّ يُدْرِكْهُ الْمَوْتُ فَقَدْ وَقَعَ أَجْرُهُ عَلَى اللَّهِ ۖ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَفْوًا رَحِيمًا ۝

## SECTION 15

616. If through physical mental, or moral incapacity we are unable to fight the good fight we must rest content with putting up with evil and just guarding ourselves from it God's gracious Mercy will recognise and forgive our weakness if it is real weakness, and not merely an excuse

617 Verse 101 gives permission to shorten congregational prayers when people are on a journey verses 102 104 deal with cases when they are in danger at war in face of the enemy The shortening of congregational prayers in both cases is further governed as to details by the practice of the Apostle and his Companions As to journeys, two questions arise (1) what constitutes a journey for this purpose? (2) is the fear of an attack an essential condition for the shortening of congregational prayers? As to (1) it is best to leave the matter to discretion having regard to all the circumstances of the journey as in the case of the journeys which excuse a fast see ii 184 n 190 The text leaves it to discretion As to (2), the practice of the Apostle shows that danger is not an essential condition it is merely mentioned as a possible incident The Apostle usually shortened the prayers from four Rak'ats to two Rak'ats in *Zuhr* (midday prayer), *Aṣr* (afternoon prayer) and *Iskāa* (night prayer) the other two are in any case short, *Fajr* (morning prayer) having two Rak'ats and *Magrib* (evening prayer) having three

02 When thou (O Apostle)  
 Art with them, and standest  
 To lead them in prayer,  
 Let one party of them  
 Stand up (in prayer) with thee,  
 Taking their arms with them  
 When they finish  
 Their prostrations, let them  
 Take their position in the rear,  
 And let the other party come up—  
 Which hath not yet prayed—  
 And let them pray with thee,  
 Taking all precautions,  
 And bearing arms  
 The Unbelievers wish,  
 If ye were negligent  
 Of your arms and your baggage,  
 To assault you in a single rush<sup>618</sup>  
 But there is no blame on you  
 If ye put away your arms  
 Because of the inconvenience  
 Of rain or because ye are ill,  
 But take (every) precaution  
 For yourselves For the  
 Unbelievers  
 God hath prepared  
 A humiliating punishment

103 When ye pass<sup>619</sup>  
 (Congregational) prayers,  
 Celebrate God's praises,  
 Standing, sitting down,  
 Or lying down on your sides,  
 But when ye are free  
 From danger, set up  
 Regular Prayers  
 For such prayers  
 Are enjoined on Believers  
 At stated times

١-٢ وَإِذَا كُنْتَ فِيهِمْ فَأَقِمْ لَهُمُ الصَّلَاةَ  
 فَلْتَعْمَ طَائِفَةٌ مِّنْهُمْ مَّعَكَ  
 وَلْيَأْخُذُوا بَأْسَلِحَتِهِمْ ۖ فَإِذَا سَجَدُوا  
 فَلْيَكُونُوا مِنْ وَرَائِكُمْ وَلْتَأْتِ طَائِفَةٌ  
 أُخْرَىٰ لَمْ يُصَلُّوا فَلْيُصَلُّوا مَعَكَ  
 وَلْيَأْخُذُوا حِذْرَهُمْ وَأَسْلِحَتَهُمْ  
 وَذَٰلِكُمْ كَمَا وَاللَّيْلِينَ كَفَرُوا وَأَوْتَفَّخُونَ عَنْ أَسْلِحَتِكُمْ  
 وَأَمْتِعَتِكُمْ فَيَمِيلُونَ عَلَيْكُمْ  
 مَيْلَةً وَاحِدَةً ۖ وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ  
 إِن كَانَ بِكُمْ أَذًى مِّن مَّطَرٍ  
 أَوْ كُنْتُمْ مَّرْضَىٰ  
 أَنْ تَضَعُوا أَسْلِحَتَكُمْ  
 وَخُذُوا حِذْرَكُمْ  
 إِنَّ اللَّهَ أَعَدَّ لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابًا مُّهِينًا  
 ١-٣ فَإِذَا أَقَضَيْتُمُ الصَّلَاةَ  
 فَادْكُرُوا اللَّهَ قِيَمًا  
 وَتَعُودُوا ۖ وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِكُمْ  
 فَإِذَا اطْمَأْنَنْتُمْ فَأَقْبِمُوا الصَّلَاةَ  
 إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ كَانَتْ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ كِتَابًا  
 مَّوْقُوتًا

618 The congregational prayer in danger in face of the enemy rests on the principle that the congregation should be divided into two parties one party prays while the other watches the enemy and then the second party comes up to prayers while the first falls back to face the enemy, either party does only one or two Rakats or about half the congregational prayer every precaution is taken to prevent a rush by the enemy even while at prayers armour and arms need not be put off except when rain is likely to cause inconvenience to the wearer and damage to the arms, or when illness or fatigue causes the wearer's strength to fail Details can be varied according to circumstances, as was actually done by the Apostle at different times

619 Two interpretations are possible (1) when ye have finished congregational prayers or (2) "when (on account of extreme danger) ye have to pass over congregational prayers altogether—even the shorter form indicated for times of danger I prefer the latter as it accords better with the following sentence, which allows you to remember God individually in any posture possible during the danger But when the danger is past the full prayers should be offered at the stated times

104. And slacken not  
In following up the enemy  
If ye are suffering hardships,  
They are suffering similar  
Hardships, but ye have  
Hope from God, while they <sup>620</sup>  
Have none And God  
Is full of knowledge and wisdom

١٠٤- وَلَا تَهِنُوا فِي اتِّبَاعِ الْقَوْمِ  
إِنْ تَكُونُوا تَأْلُفُونَ فَإِنَّهُمْ يَأْلُفُونَ كَمَا  
تَأْلُفُونَ وَتَرْجُونَ مِنَ اللَّهِ مَا لَا يَرْجُونَ  
وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ۝

C 66 —Beware of treachery, that would use

(iv 105—126) The good and pious for its wicked  
Ends its plots will but recoil  
On its own head The righteous  
Have no cause for secrecy, except  
In doing good 'Tis evil that  
Misleads, deceives, and even dares  
Deface fair Nature, as by God  
Created Shun all evil, and be firm  
In righteousness and faith in God

#### SECTION 16

- 105 We have sent down  
To thee the Book in truth,  
That thou mightest judge  
Between men, as guided  
By God so be not (used)  
As an advocate by those  
Who betray their trust, <sup>621</sup>
- 106 But seek the forgiveness  
Of God, for God is  
Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful

١٠٥- إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ  
لِيَحْكُمَ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ  
بِمَا أَرَاكَ اللَّهُ  
وَلَا تَكُنْ لِلْخَائِبِينَ خَصِمًا ۝

١٠٦- وَاسْتَغْفِرِ اللَّهَ  
إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَفُورًا رَحِيمًا ۝

620 Religion should be a source of strength and not of weakness in all our affairs. If we have to struggle hard and suffer hardships those without faith have to do the same with this difference that the man of Faith is full of hope in God whereas the man without Faith has nothing to sustain him.

621. The Commentators explain this passage with reference to the case of ʿAṣma ibn Ubayraq who was nominally a Muslim but really a Hypocrite and given to all sorts of wicked deeds. He was suspected of having stolen a set of armour, and when the trail was hot he planted the stolen property into the house of a Jew where it was found. The Jew denied the charge and accused ʿAṣma, but the sympathies of the Muslim community were with ʿAṣma on account of his nominal profession of Islam. The case was brought to the Apostle, who acquitted the Jew according to the strict principle of justice, as "guided by God". Attempts were made to prejudice him and deceive him into using his authority to favour ʿAṣma.

The general lesson is that the righteous man is faced with all sorts of subtle wiles: the wicked will try to appeal to his highest sympathies and most honourable motives to deceive him and use him as an instrument for defeating justice. He should be careful and cautious, and seek the help of God for protection against deception and for firmness in dealing the strictest justice without fear or favour. To do otherwise is to betray a sacred trust: the trustee must defeat all attempts made to mislead him.

107 Contend not on behalf  
Of such as betray  
Their own souls, <sup>622</sup>  
For God loveth not  
One given to perfidy  
And crime,

١٠٧- وَلَا تُجَادِلْ عَنِ الَّذِينَ يَخْتَانُونَ  
أَنْفُسَهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ  
مَنْ كَانَ خَوَّانًا أَثِيمًا ۝

108 They may hide  
(Their crimes) from men,  
But they cannot hide  
(Them) from God, seeing that  
He is in their midst  
When they plot by night,  
In words that He cannot  
Approve and God <sup>623</sup>  
Doth compass round  
All that they do

١٠٨- يَسْتَخْفُونَ مِنَ النَّاسِ  
وَلَا يَسْتَخْفُونَ مِنَ اللَّهِ  
وَهُوَ مَعَهُمْ إِذْ يُبَيِّتُونَ مَا لَا يَرْضَى  
مِنَ الْقَوْلِ  
وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ مُحِيطًا ۝

109 Ah! these are the sort  
Of men on whose behalf  
Ye may contend in this world,  
But who will contend with God  
On their behalf on the Day  
Of Judgment, or who  
Will carry their affairs through?

١٠٩- هَٰؤُلَاءِ  
جَدَلْتُمْ عَنْهُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا  
فَمَنْ يُجَادِلُ اللَّهَ عَنْهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ  
أَمْ مَنْ يَكُونُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَكِيلًا ۝

110 If any one does evil  
Or wrongs his own soul,  
But afterwards seeks  
God's forgiveness, he will find  
God Oft-forgiving,  
Most Merciful

١١٠- وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ سُوءًا أَوْ يَظْلِمْ نَفْسَهُ  
ثُمَّ يَسْتَغْفِرِ اللَّهَ  
يَجِدِ اللَّهَ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا ۝

111 And if any one earns <sup>624</sup>  
Sin, he earns it against

١١١- وَمَنْ يَكْسِبْ إِثْمًا فَإِنَّمَا يَكْسِبُهُ

622 Our souls are a sort of trust with us. We have to guard them against all temptation. Those who surrender to crime or evil betray that trust. We are warned against being deceived into taking their part, induced either by plausible appearances or by such incentives to partiality as that they belong to our own people or that some link connects them with us, whereas when we are out to do justice, we must not allow any irrelevant considerations to sway us.

623 The plots of sinners are known fully to God and He can fully circumvent them if necessary according to the fulness of His wisdom. The word used is *Compass them round muhiṣ* not only does God know all about it but He is all round it. If in His wisdom He allows it it is not because He has not complete control over it but because having it as it were enclosed in a complete circle He can use it to further His own Plan. Even out of evil He can bring good.

624 *Kasaba* = to earn, to gain, to work for something valuable to lay up a provision for the future life. We do a day's labour to earn our livelihood so in a spiritual sense whatever good or evil we do in this life earns us good or evil in the life to come. In verses 110-112 three cases are considered (1) if we do ill and repent God will forgive, (2) if we do ill and do not repent thinking that we can hide it, we are wrong, nothing is hidden from God and we shall suffer the full consequences in the life to come for we can never evade our personal responsibility (3) if we do ill great or small and impute it to another our original responsibility for the ill remains but we add to it something else, for we tie round our necks the guilt of falsehood which converts even our minor fault into a great sin and in any case brands us even in this life with shame and ignominy.

His own soul for God  
Is full of knowledge and wisdom

عَلَى نَفْسِهِ ۖ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ۝

- 112 But if any one earns  
A fault or a sin  
And throws it on to one  
That is innocent,  
He carries (on himself)  
(Both) a falsehood  
And a flagrant sin

۱۱۲- وَمَنْ يَكْسِبْ خَطِيئَةً أَوْ إِثْمًا  
ثُمَّ يَزِرْ بِهَا بَرِيئًا  
فَقَدْ أَحْمَلَ بُهْتَانًا  
وَإِثْمًا مُبِينًا ۝

۱۱۲

### SECTION 17

- 113 But for the Grace of God  
To thee and His Mercy,  
A party of them would  
Certainly have plotted  
To lead thee astray  
But (in fact) they will only  
Lead their own souls astray,  
And to thee they can do  
No harm in the least  
For God hath sent down  
To thee the Book and Wisdom  
And taught thee what thou  
Knewest not (before)  
And great is the Grace  
Of God unto thee

۱۱۳- وَلَوْ لَا فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكَ  
وَرَحْمَتُهُ  
لَهَمَّتْ طَائِفَةٌ مِنْهُمْ أَنْ يُضِلُّوكَ  
وَمَا يُضِلُّونَ إِلَّا أَنْفُسَهُمْ  
وَمَا يَضُرُّونَكَ مِنْ شَيْءٍ ۖ  
وَأَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ  
وَعَلَّمَكَ مَا لَمْ تَكُنْ تَعْلَمُ ۖ  
وَكَانَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكَ عَظِيمًا ۝

۱۱۳

- 114 In most of their secret talks  
There is no good but if  
One exhorts to a deed  
Of charity or justice  
Or conciliation between men,<sup>625</sup>  
(Secrecy is permissible)  
To him who does this,  
Seeking the good pleasure  
Of God, We shall soon give  
A reward of the highest (value)

۱۱۴- لَا خَيْرَ فِي كَثِيرٍ مِنْ نَجْوَاهُمْ  
إِلَّا مَنْ أَمَرَ بِصَدَقَةٍ أَوْ مَعْرُوفٍ  
أَوْ إِصْلَاحٍ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ ۖ  
وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ ابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِ اللَّهِ  
سَوْفَ نُؤْتِيهِ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ۝

625 Usually secrecy is for evil ends or from questionable motives or because the person seeking secrecy is ashamed of himself and knows that if his acts or motives became known he would make himself odious. Islam therefore disapproves of secrecy and loves and enjoins openness in all consultations and doings. But there are three things in which secrecy is permissible and indeed laudable, provided the motive be purely unselfish to earn 'the good pleasure of God' (1) if you are doing a deed of charity or beneficence whether in giving material things or in helping in moral intellectual or spiritual matters here publicity may not be agreeable to the recipient of your beneficence and you have to think of his feelings (2) where an unpleasant act of justice or correction has to be done this should be done, but there is no virtue in publishing it abroad and causing humiliation to some parties or adding to their humiliation by publicity, (3) where there is a delicate question of conciliating parties to a quarrel, they may be very touchy about publicity but quite amenable to the influence of a man acting in private.

- 115 If anyone contends with  
The Apostle even after  
Guidance has been plainly  
Conveyed to him, and follows  
A path other than that  
Becoming to men of Faith,  
We shall leave him  
In the path he has chosen,  
And land him in Hell,—  
What an evil refuge !

۱۱۵- وَمَنْ تُشَاقِقِ الرَّسُولَ  
مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ الْهُدَى  
وَيَتَّبِعْ غَيْرَ سَبِيلِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ نُوَلِّهِ  
مَا تَوَلَّى وَنُضْلِهِ جَهَنَّمَ  
وَسَاءَتْ مَصِيرًا ۝

### SECTION 18

- 116 God forgiveth not  
(The sin of) joining other gods<sup>626</sup>  
With Him, but He forgiveth  
Whom He pleaseth other sins  
Than this one who joins  
Other gods with God,  
Hath strayed far, far away  
(From the Right)

۱۱۶- إِنْ اِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَعْفِرُ اَنْ تُشْرَكَ بِهِ  
وَيَعْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ  
وَمَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ  
فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَالًا بَعِيدًا ۝

- 117 (The Pagans), leaving Him,  
Call but upon female deities<sup>627</sup>  
They call but upon Satan  
The persistent rebel !

۱۱۷- اِنْ تَدْعُوْنَ مِنْ دُوْنِهِ اِلَّا اِنْسًا  
وَ اِنْ تَدْعُوْنَ اِلَّا شَيْطَانًا مَّرِيدًا ۝

- 118 God did curse him,  
But he said " I will take  
Of Thy servants a portion<sup>628</sup>  
Marked off,

۱۱۸- لَعَنَهُ اللَّهُ وَقَالَ لَا تُخَدِّتْ مِنْ  
عِبَادِكَ نَصِيبًا مَّفْرُوضًا ۝

- 119 " I will mislead them,<sup>629</sup>  
And I will create

۱۱۹- وَ اَلَا صَلَّاهُمْ وَ اَلَا مَبِينَهُمْ

626 Cf iv 48 and n 569 Blasphemy in the spiritual kingdom is like treason in the political kingdom

627 The unity power and goodness of God are so manifest in nature and in the human mind when it is in accord with the universal spirit that only the most abject perversion can account for the sin of spiritual treason That sin arises from perverted ideas of sex or perverted ideas of self The perversion of sex is to suppose that sex rules in spiritual matters From it arise such horrible creations of the imagination as Kālī the blood thirsty goddess of India, or Hecate the goddess of revenge and hate in Greek mythology Even in beautiful forms like Saraswati (the goddess of learning) or Minerva (the virgin goddess of sport and arts) to say nothing of Venus (the goddess of carnal pleasures) the emphasis laid on sex destroys a right view of spiritual nature Perverted ideas of self are typified in the story of Satan who was so puffed up with arrogance that he disobeyed God and God cursed him Both these perversions if allowed lodgment completely ruin our spiritual nature and deface God's handiwork Hence it is not merely an outer sin but one that corrupts us through and through

628 Satan obtained God's permission to tempt man and this was implied in such free will as was granted to man by God Satan's boast is that the portion of mankind seduced by him will be so corrupted in their nature that they will bear a sort of brand that will mark them off as his own, or that they will be like a portion assigned to himself

629 Satan's deceptions are with false desires, false superstitions, and false fears

In them false desires, I will  
Order them to slit the ears<sup>630</sup>  
Of cattle, and to deface<sup>631</sup>  
The (fair) nature created  
By God " Whoever,  
Forsaking God, takes Satan  
For a friend, hath  
Of a surety suffered  
A loss that is manifest

وَلَا مَرْتَبَهُمْ فَلْيُبْتِئِكُنَّ آدَانَ الْأَنْعَامِ  
وَلَا مَرْتَبَهُمْ فَلْيُعَيِّرُنَّ خَلْقَ اللَّهِ  
وَمَنْ يَتَّخِذِ الشَّيْطَانَ وَلِيًّا  
مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ  
فَقَدْ خَسِرَ خُسْرَانًا مُبِينًا

- 120 Satan makes them promises,  
And creates in them false desires,  
But Satan's promises  
Are nothing but deception

۱۲- يَعِدُهُمْ وَيُمَدِّدُهُمْ  
وَمَا يَعِدُهُمْ الشَّيْطَانُ إِلَّا عُرُوفًا

- 121 They (his dupes)  
Will have their dwelling  
In Hell, and from it  
They will find no way  
Of escape

۱۲۱- أُولَئِكَ مَا أُولَهُمْ حَهَمُهُمْ  
وَلَا يَجِدُونَ عَنْهَا مَخَصَصًا

- 122 But those who believe  
And do deeds of righteousness,—  
We shall soon admit them  
To Gardens, with rivers  
Flowing beneath,—to dwell  
Therein for ever  
God's promise is the truth,  
And whose word can be  
Truer than God's?

۱۲۲- وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ  
سَنُدْخِلُهُمْ حَتَّىٰ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا  
الْأَنْهَارُ  
خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا وَعَدَ اللَّهُ حَقًّا  
وَمَنْ أَصْدَقُ مِنَ اللَّهِ قِيلًا

- 123 Not your desires, nor those<sup>632</sup>  
Of the People of the Book

۱۲۳- لَيْسَ بِأَمَانِيكُمْ وَلَا أَمَانِي أَهْلِ

630 Slitting the ears of cattle is just one instance of the superstitions to which men become slaves when they run after false gods. Astrology magic and vain beliefs in things that do not exist lead men away from the one true God

631 To deface the (fair) nature created by God there is both a physical and a spiritual meaning. We see many kinds of defacements practised on men and animals against their true nature as created by God partly on account of superstition partly on account of selfishness. Spiritually the case is even worse. How many natures are dwarfed or starved and turned from their original instincts by cruel superstitions or customs? God created man pure the Evil One defaces the image

632 Personal responsibility is again and again insisted on as the key note of Islam. In this are implied faith and right conduct. Faith is not an external thing it begins with an act of will but if true and sincere it affects the whole being and leads to right conduct. In this it is distinguished from the kind of faith which promises salvation because some one else in whom you are asked to believe has borne away the sins of men, or the kind of faith which says that because you are born of a certain race (Children of Abraham) or a certain caste, you are privileged, and your conduct will be judged by a different standard from that of other men. Whatever you are, if you do evil, you must suffer the consequences unless God's Mercy comes to your help

(Can prevail) 'whoever  
Works evil, will be  
Requited accordingly  
Nor will he find, besides God,  
Any protector or helper

الْكُتِبَ مَنْ بَعَثَ سُوءًا يُجْزَى بِهِ  
وَلَا يَجِدُ لَهُ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَلِيًّا وَلَا نَصِيرًا

- 124 If any do deeds  
Of righteousness,—  
Be they male or female —  
And have faith,  
They will enter Heaven,  
And not the least injustice<sup>633</sup>  
Will be done to them

١٢٣- وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِنَ الصَّالِحَاتِ  
مِنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَى وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ  
فَأُولَئِكَ يَدْخُلُونَ السَّعَةَ  
وَلَا يُظْلَمُونَ نَقِيرًا

- 125 Who can be better  
In religion than one  
Who submits his whole self  
To God, does good,  
And follows the way  
Of Abraham the true in faith ?  
For God did take  
Abraham for a friend<sup>634</sup>

١٢٥- وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ دِينًا  
مِمَّنْ أَسْلَمَ وَجْهَهُ لِلَّهِ وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ  
وَاتَّبَعَ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا  
وَاتَّخَذَ اللَّهُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ خَلِيلًا

- 126 But to God belong all things  
In the heavens and on earth  
And He it is that  
Encompasseth all things<sup>635</sup>

١٢٦- وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ  
وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ مُخِيطًا

#### C 67 —Justice to women and orphans

- (iv 127-152) Is part of religion and the fear  
Of God Stand out firmly  
For justice to all, even against  
Yourselves or your nearest of kin  
Remain firm in faith, and consort not  
With evil or hypocrisy Be true  
In speech, and wound not others  
Nor distinguish between Teachers of Truth,  
For God's Truth is one and should be believed

633 *Naqir*—the groove in a date stone a thing of no value whatever Cf n 575 to iv 53

634 Abraham is distinguished in Muslim theology with the title of 'Friend of God' This does not of course mean that he was anything more than a mortal But his faith was pure and true and his conduct was firm and righteous in all circumstances He was the fountain and origin of the three streams of religious thought which were afterwards crystallised in the institutions of Moses, Jesus and Muhammad the Chosen One

635 *Muḥṭāḥ* Cf iv 108, and n 623



## SECTION 19

127 **¶** They ask thy instruction  
Concerning the Women  
Say God doth  
Instruct you about them  
And (remember) what hath  
Been rehearsed unto you <sup>636</sup>  
In the Book, concerning  
The orphans of women to whom  
Ye give not the portions  
Prescribed, and yet whom ye  
Desire to marry, as also  
Concerning the children <sup>637</sup>  
Who are weak and oppressed  
That ye stand firm  
For justice to orphans  
There is not a good deed  
Which ye do, but God  
Is well-acquainted therewith

١٢٧- وَيَسْتَفْتُونَكَ فِي النِّسَاءِ  
قُلِ اللَّهُ يُفْتِيكُمْ فِيهِنَّ  
وَمَا يُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الْكِتَابِ  
فِي يَمِينِ النِّسَاءِ الَّتِي  
لَا تُؤْتُونَهُنَّ مَا كُتِبَ لَهُنَّ  
وَتَرْغَبُونَ أَنْ تَنْكِحُوهُنَّ  
وَالْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ مِنَ الْوُلْدَانِ  
وَأَنْ تَقُومُوا إِلَيْهِمْ بِالْقِسْطِ  
وَمَا تَفْعَلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ  
فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِهِ عَلِيمًا

128 **¶** If a wife fears  
Cruelty or desertion  
On her husband's part,  
There is no blame on them  
If they arrange  
An amicable settlement  
Between themselves,  
And such settlement is best,

١٢٨- وَإِنْ امْرَأَةٌ خَافَتْ  
مِنْ بَعْلِهَا شُكْرًا أَوْ إِعْرَاضًا  
فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا  
أَنْ يُصْلِحَا بَيْنَهُمَا صُلْحًا  
وَالصُّلْحُ خَيْرٌ

636 Again and again is it impressed on the community of Islam to be just in their dealings with women orphans children and all whose weakness requires special consideration. The law about widows and orphans inheritance dower and marriage had already been declared in iv 2 35 and further instructions are now given on a further reference. The words translated *orphans of women* mean I think the orphaned children of widows of whom there were several after the battle of Uhud and whom it was the duty of the community to provide for. But some Commentators take them to mean female orphans. In any case because women were orphans or widows it was not right that anyone should take advantage of their helpless position to deprive them of dower or of their portion in inheritance.

637 Cf iv 75 n 592

Both widows and orphans are to be helped because they are ordinarily weak ill treated, and oppressed. In communities which base their civil rights on brute strength the weaker go to the wall, and public opinion expects nothing else. In Nietzsche's philosophy of the Superman that doctrine is stressed strongly and some of the militarist nations in our own time seem inclined to support this reversion to our primitive instincts. Even in modern democracies of the saner sort we are often told that it is the fate of minorities to suffer strength of numbers here becomes the passport to power and privilege. Islam while upholding sane manly views in general enjoins the most solicitous care for the weak and oppressed in every way—in rights of property, in social rights and in the right to opportunities of development. Spiritual strength or weakness does not necessarily go with physical or numerical strength.

Even though men's souls  
Are swayed by greed<sup>638</sup>  
But if ye do good  
And practise self-restraint,  
God is well-acquainted  
With all that ye do

وَأُحْضِرَتِ الْأَنفُسُ الشُّحَّ  
وَإِنْ تَحْسَبُوا وَتَتَّقُوا  
فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا ٥

129 Ye are never able  
To be fair and just  
As between women,  
Even if it is  
Your ardent desire  
But turn not away  
(From a woman) altogether,  
So as to leave her (as it were)  
Hanging (in the air)<sup>639</sup>  
If ye come to a friendly  
Understanding, and practise  
Self-restraint, God is  
Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful

١٢٩- وَلَنْ تَسْتَطِيعُوا  
أَنْ تَعْدِلُوا بَيْنَ النِّسَاءِ  
وَلَوْ حَرَضْتُمْ  
فَلَا تَمِيلُوا كُلَّ الْمِيلِ  
فَتَذَرُوهُنَّ كَالْمُعَلَّقَةِ  
وَإِنْ تَصْلَحْوا وَتَتَّقُوا  
فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا ٥

130 But if they disagree  
(And must part), God  
Will provide abundance  
For all from His  
All-reaching bounty  
For God is He  
That careth for all  
And is Wise

١٣٠- وَإِنْ يَتَفَرَّقَا  
يُغْنِ اللَّهُ كُلًّا مِّنْ سَعَتِهِ  
وَكَانَ اللَّهُ وَاسِعًا حَكِيمًا ٥

131 To God belong all things  
In the heavens and on earth<sup>640</sup>

١٣١- وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ

638 To protect the woman's economic interests various rules are prescribed for dower in marriage. But the sanctity of marriage itself is greater than any economic interests. Divorce is of all things permitted most hateful to God. Therefore if a breach between husband and wife can be prevented by some economic consideration it is better to make that concession than to imperil the future of the wife, the children and probably the husband also. Such concessions are permissible in view of the love of wealth ingrained in unregenerate man but a recommendation is made that we should practise self-restraint and do what we can to come to an amicable settlement without any economic sacrifice on the part of the woman.

639 In this material world there are two principal causes of division between man and wife: money and the other woman or the other man. Money was dealt with in the last verse. Here is the case of 'the other woman'. Legally more than one wife (up to four) are permissible on the condition that the man can be perfectly fair and just to all. But this is a condition almost impossible to fulfil. If in the hope that he might be able to fulfil it a man puts himself in that impossible position, it is only right to insist that he should not discard one but at least fulfil all the outward duties that are incumbent on him in respect of her.

640 Notice the refrain: 'To God belong all things in the heavens and on earth' repeated three times each time with a new application. In the first instance it follows the statement of God's universal providence and love. If two persons in spite of every sincere desire to love and comfort each other fail to achieve that end and have to separate, God's all-reaching bounty never fails for He is the Lord of all things. In the second instance it is connected with God's Self-existence, Self-excellence and independence of all creatures: all His commands are for our good and they are given to all His creatures, according to their capacities. In the third instance it is connected with His universal power for He could destroy any individual or nation and create a new one without any loss to Himself, but He gives a chance to all again and again, and even rewards them beyond their own ambitions.

Verily We have directed  
The People of the Book  
Before you, and you (O Muslims)  
To fear God But if ye  
Deny Him, lo! unto God  
Belong all things  
In the heavens and on earth,  
And God is free  
Of all wants, worthy<sup>641</sup>  
Of all praise

وَلَقَدْ وَصَّيْنَا الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ  
مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ  
وَأَيَّاكُمْ أَنْ اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ  
وَإِنْ تَكْفُرُوا  
فَإِنَّ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمُوتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ  
وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَنِيًّا حَنِيدًا ۝

132 Yea, unto God belong  
All things in the heavens  
And on earth, and enough  
Is God to carry through<sup>642</sup>  
All affairs

۱۳۲- وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمُوتِ  
وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ  
وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ وَكِيلًا ۝

133 If it were His Will,  
He could destroy you,  
O mankind, and create  
Another race, for He  
Hath power this to do

۱۳۳- إِنْ يَشَأْ يُذْهِبْكُمْ أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ  
وَيَأْتِ بِآخَرِينَ  
وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلَى ذَلِكَ قَدِيرًا ۝

134 If any one desires  
A reward in this life,  
In God's (gift) is the reward  
(Both) of this life  
And of the Hereafter<sup>643</sup>  
For God is He that heareth  
And seeth (all things)

۱۳۴- مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ ثَوَابَ الدُّنْيَا  
فَعِنْدَ اللَّهِ ثَوَابُ الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ  
وَكَانَ اللَّهُ سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا ۝


وَعِنْدَ

641 God's existence is absolute existence. It does not depend on any other person or any other thing. And it is worthy of all praise for it is all good and comprises every possible excellence. It is necessary to stress this point in order to show that the moral law for man is not a mere matter of transcendental commands but really rests on the essential needs of mankind itself. If therefore such schools of thought as Behaviourism proved their theories up to the hilt they do not affect the position of Islam in the least. The highest ethical standards are enjoined by Islam not as dogmatic imperatives but because they can be shown to follow from the needs of man's nature and the results of man's experience.

642 This refers to the next verse. He does not need us but we need Him. Our hopes, our happiness, our success centre in Him, but He is Self sufficient. He has the power to supersede us, but His goodness is ever seeking to give us every chance in this world as well as in the Hereafter.

643 Man in this life can only see up to the horizon of this life. The highest rewards which his wishes or ambitions can conceive of are conceived in the terms of this life. But God can give him not only these but something infinitely higher—the rewards of the Hereafter,—which it did not even enter his heart to ask for or his imagination to conceive.

## SECTION 20

135.  ye who believe !  
 Stand out firmly  
 For justice, as witnesses<sup>644</sup>  
 To God, even as against  
 Yourselves, or your parents,  
 Or your kin, and whether  
 It be (against) rich or poor<sup>645</sup>  
 For God can best protect both  
 Follow not the lusts  
 (Of your hearts), lest ye  
 Swerve, and if ye  
 Distort (justice) or decline  
 To do justice, verily  
 God is well acquainted  
 With all that ye do

١٣٥- يَٰٓأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ  
 بِالْقِسْطِ شُهَدَاءَ لِلّٰهِ  
 وَلَوْ عَلَىٰٓ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَوِ الْوَالِدِينَ  
 وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ إِن تَكُنْ غَنِيًّا أَوْ فَقِيرًا  
 فَاللّٰهُ أُولَىٰ بِهِمَا  
 فَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا الْهَوَىٰ  
 أَنْ تَعْدِلُوا  
 وَإِنْ تَلَوْا أَوْ تَعْرَضُوا  
 فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا ۝

- 136 O ye who believe !  
 Believe in God  
 And His Apostle,  
 And the scripture which He  
 Hath sent to His Apostle  
 And the scripture which He sent  
 To those before (him)<sup>646</sup>  
 Any who denieth God,  
 His angels, His Books,  
 His Apostles, and the Day  
 Of Judgment, hath gone  
 Far, far astray

١٣٦- يَٰٓأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا  
 آمِنُوا بِاللّٰهِ وَرَسُولِهِ  
 وَالْكِتَابِ الَّذِي نَزَّلَ عَلَىٰ رَسُولِهِ  
 وَالْكِتَابِ الَّذِي نَزَّلَ مِنْ قَبْلُ  
 وَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِاللّٰهِ  
 وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَكُتُبِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ  
 فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَالًا بَعِيدًا ۝

644 Justice is God's attribute and to stand firm for justice is to be a witness to God even if it is detrimental to our own interests (as we conceive them) or the interests of those who are near and dear to us. According to the Latin saying: Let justice be done though heaven should fall.

But Islamic justice is something higher than the formal justice of Roman Law or any other human Law. It is even more penetrative than the subtler justice in the speculations of the Greek philosophers. It searches out the innermost motives because we are to act as in the presence of God to whom all things act and motives are known.

645 Some people may be inclined to favour the rich because they expect something from them. Some people may be inclined to favour the poor because they are generally helpless. Partiality in either case is wrong. Be just without fear or favour. Both the rich and the poor are under God's protection as far as their legitimate interests are concerned but they cannot expect to be favoured at the expense of others. And He can protect their interests far better than any man.

646 If your belief is by habit or birth or the example of those you love or respect or admire, make that belief more specific and personal to yourself. We must not only have faith but realise that faith in our inmost being. The chief objects of our Faith are God His Apostle and His Revelations. To all these we must give a home in our hearts. The angels we do not see and realise as we realise God who is nearer to us than the vehicle of our life blood and the Day of Judgment is for our future experience, but we must not deny them or we cut off a part of our spiritual view.

137 Those who believe,  
Then reject Faith,  
Then believe (again)  
And (again) reject Faith,  
And go on increasing  
In Unbelief,— God  
Will not forgive them  
Nor guide them on the Way <sup>647</sup>

١٣٧- إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا ثُمَّ كَفَرُوا  
ثُمَّ آمَنُوا ثُمَّ كَفَرُوا  
ثُمَّ أَزَادُوا كُفْرًا  
لَمْ يَكُنِ اللَّهُ لِيَغْفِرَ لَهُمْ  
وَلَا يَهْدِيَهُمْ سَبِيلًا ۝

138 To the Hypocrites give  
The glad tidings that  
There is for them  
(But) a grievous Penalty,—

١٣٨- بَشِّرِ السَّافِقِينَ  
بَأَن لَّهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ۝

139 Yea, to those who take  
For friends Unbelievers  
Rather than Believers  
Is it honour they seek  
Among them? Nay,—  
All honour is with God <sup>648</sup>

١٣٩- الَّذِينَ يَتَّخِذُونَ الْكَافِرِينَ أَوْلِيَاءَ  
مِنْ دُونِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۖ  
أَبْتَغُونَ عِنْدَهُمُ الْعِزَّةَ  
فَإِنَّ الْعِزَّةَ لِلَّهِ جَمِيعًا ۝

140. Already has He sent you <sup>649</sup>  
Word in the Book, that when  
Ye hear the Signs of God  
Held in defiance and ridicule,  
Ye are not to sit with them  
Unless they turn to a different  
Theme if ye did, ye would be  
Like them For God will  
Collect the Hypocrites and those  
Who defy Faith—all in Hell,—

١٤٠- وَقَدْ رَزَّلَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الْكِتَابِ أَنْ إِذَا  
سَمِعْتُمْ آيَاتَ اللَّهِ تُكْفَرُ بِهَا وَيُسْتَهْزَأُ بِهَا  
فَلَا تَقْعُدُوا مَعَهُمْ  
حَتَّى يَخُوضُوا فِي حَدِيثٍ غَيْرِهِ ۚ  
إِنَّكُمْ إِذَا أَثْلَلْتُمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ حَاكِمُ السَّافِقِينَ  
وَالْكَافِرِينَ فِي جَهَنَّمَ جَمِيعًا ۝

<sup>647</sup> Those who go on changing sides again and again can have no real Faith at any time Their motives are mere worldly double dealing How can they expect God's grace or forgiveness?

Here is a clear warning against those who make their religion a mere matter of worldly convenience True religion goes far deeper It transforms the very nature of man After that transformation it is as impossible for him to change as it is for light to become darkness

<sup>648</sup> If the motive is some advantage some honour—the fountain of all good is God How can it really be expected from those who deny Faith? And if there is some show of worldly honour what is it worth against the contempt they earn in the spiritual world?

<sup>649</sup> Cf vi 68 an earlier and Meccan verse

Where we see or hear Truth held in light esteem we ought to make our protest and withdraw from such company not out of arrogance as if we thought ourselves superior to other people but out of real humility lest our own nature be corrupted in such society But it is possible that our protest or our sincere remonstrance may change the theme of discourse In that case we have done good to those who were inclined to hold Truth in light esteem for we have saved them for ridiculing Truth

- 141 (These are) the ones who  
Wait and watch about you  
If ye do gain  
A victory from God,  
They say "Were we not  
With you?"—but if  
The Unbelievers gain  
A success, they say  
(To them) "Did we not  
Gain an advantage over you,  
And did we not guard  
You from the Believers?"  
But God will judge  
Betwixt you on the Day  
Of Judgment And never  
Will God grant  
To the Unbelievers  
A way (to triumph)  
Over the Believers <sup>650</sup>

١٤١- الَّذِينَ يَتَرَبَّصُونَ بِكُمْ  
فَإِنْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فَتْحٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ  
قَالُوا أَلَمْ نَكُنْ مَعَكُمْ  
وَإِنْ كَانَ لِلْكَافِرِينَ نَصِيبٌ  
قَالُوا أَلَمْ نَسْتَحِذْ عَلَيْكُمْ  
وَنَنْتَعِزَّكُمْ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ  
فَاللَّهُ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَكُمْ  
يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ  
وَلَنْ يَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ  
لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ سَبِيلًا ۚ

#### SECTION 21

- 142 The Hypocrites—they think  
They are over-reaching God,  
But He will over-reach them  
When they stand up to prayer,  
They stand without earnestness,  
To be seen of men,  
But little do they hold  
God in remembrance ,
- 143 (They are) distracted in mind  
Even in the midst of it,—  
Being (sincerely) for neither  
One group nor for another  
Whom God leaves straying,—  
Never wilt thou find

١٤٢- إِنَّ السُّفْهَانَ يُخَادِعُونَ اللَّهَ  
وَهُوَ خَادِعُهُمْ  
وَإِذَا قَامُوا إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ قَامُوا كُسَالَى  
يُرَاءُونَ النَّاسَ  
وَلَا يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ۚ

١٤٣- مَثَلُ بَدِيَيْنِ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ  
لَا إِلَى هَؤُلَاءِ وَلَا إِلَى هَؤُلَاءِ  
وَمَنْ يُضِلِلِ اللَّهُ فَلَنْ يَهْدِيَ

650 The methods and motives of Hypocrisy are thoroughly unmasked here. It has no principles but watches for an opportunity to turn any event to its own advantage. If battle is joined between two inconsistent principles it has no belief in either but watches the result. Here is unceasing fight between Good and Evil in this world. If the Good seems to win the hypocrites range themselves on its side with unctuous words taking a great part of the credit to themselves. Perhaps the balance tips the other way later and they have to make their peace with Evil. Oh! they say airily 'we were in the ranks of your enemy before on purpose to protect you when they were too strong for you!' This may suit the ways of the world. But the day of their account will come eventually for the Good must ultimately triumph.

For him the Way <sup>651</sup>

144 O ye who believe !  
Take not for friends  
Unbelievers rather than  
Believers do ye wish  
To offer God an open  
Proof against yourselves ?

145 The Hypocrites will be  
In the lowest depths  
Of the Fire no helper  
Wilt thou find for them,—

146 Except for those who repent,  
Mend (their life), hold fast  
To God, and purify their religion  
As in God's sight if so  
They will be (numbered) <sup>652</sup>  
With the Believers  
And soon will God  
Grant to the Believers  
A reward of immense value

147 What can God gain  
By your punishment,  
If ye are grateful  
And ye believe ?  
Nay, it is God  
That recogniseth <sup>653</sup>  
5 (All good), and knoweth  
30 All things

لَهُ سَبِيلًا ۝

۱۴۴- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا الْكَافِرِينَ  
أَوْلِيَاءَ مِنْ دُونِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَخْرِيْدُونَ  
أَنْ تَجْعَلُوا لِلَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ سُلْطَانًا مُبِينًا ۝

۱۴۵- إِنَّ السُّفُوفِينَ فِي الدَّرَكِ الْأَسْفَلِ  
مِنَ النَّارِ وَلَنْ تَجِدَ لَهُمْ نَصِيرًا ۝

۱۴۶- إِلَّا الَّذِينَ تَابُوا  
وَأَصْلَحُوا وَاعْتَصَمُوا بِاللَّهِ  
وَاخْلَصُوا دِينَهُمْ لِلَّهِ  
فَأُولَٰئِكَ مَعَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَسَوْفَ يُؤْتِي  
اللَّهُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ۝

۱۴۷- مَا يَفْعَلُ اللَّهُ بِعَذَابِكُمْ  
إِنْ شَكَرْتُمْ وَآمَنْتُمْ  
وَكَانَ اللَّهُ شَاكِرًا عَلِيمًا ۝

651 If we choose evil deliberately and double our guilt by fraud and deception we do not deceive God but we deceive ourselves. We deprive ourselves of the Grace of God and are left straying away from the Path. In that condition who can guide us or show us the Way? Our true and right instincts become blunted our fraud makes us unstable in character when our fellow men find out our fraud any advantages we may have gained by the fraud are lost and we become truly distracted in mind.

652 Even Hypocrites can obtain forgiveness on four conditions (1) sincere repentance which purifies their mind (2) amendment of their conduct which purifies their outer life (3) steadfastness and devotion to God which strengthens their faith and protects them from the assaults of evil and (4) sincerity in their religion or their whole inner being which brings them as full members into the goodly Fellowship of Faith.

653 There is no pleasure nor advantage to God in punishing His own creatures over whom He watches with loving care. On the contrary He recognises any good—however little—which He finds in us and delights to give us a reward beyond all measure. His recognition of us is compared by a bold metaphor to our gratitude to Him for His favours. The epithet *Shākir* is applied to God, as here, in ii 158 and other passages. In xvi 121 it is applied to Abraham "he showed his gratitude for the favours of God who chose him and guided him to a Straight Way".

148 ~~God loves~~ not that evil  
Should be noised abroad<sup>654</sup>  
In public speech, except  
Where injustice hath been  
Done, for God  
Is He who heareth  
And knoweth all things

149 Whether ye publish  
A good deed or conceal it  
Or cover evil with pardon,  
Verily God doth blot out  
(Sins) and hath power  
(In the judgment of values)<sup>655</sup>

150 Those who deny God  
And His apostles, and (those  
Who) wish to separate  
God from His apostles,  
Saying "We believe in some  
But reject others"  
And (those who) wish  
To take a course midway,—<sup>656</sup>

151 They are in truth  
(Equally) Unbelievers,

١٤٨- لَا يُحِبُّ اللَّهُ الْجَهْرَ بِالشُّوْرِ مِنَ  
الْقَوْلِ  
إِلَّا مَنْ ظَلَمَ  
وَكَانَ اللَّهُ سَمِيعًا عَلِيمًا ٥

١٤٩- إِنْ تُبْدُوا خَيْرًا أَوْ تُخْفَوْهُ  
أَوْ تَعْفُوا عَنْ سُوءٍ  
فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَفُوًّا قَدِيرًا ٥

١٥٠- إِنْ الَّذِينَ يَكْفُرُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ  
وَيُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يُفَرِّقُوا بَيْنَ اللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ  
وَيَقُولُوا نُوْمِنُ بِبَعْضٍ وَنُكَفِّرُ بِبَعْضٍ  
وَيُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يُتَّخَذَ وَابِعٌ ذَلِكَ سَبِيلًا ٥

١٥١- أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْكَافِرُونَ حَقًّا ٥

654 We can make a public scandal of evil in many ways (1) It may be idle sensation mongering it often leads to more evil by imitation as where criminal deeds are glorified in a cinema or talked about shamelessly in a novel or drama (2) It may be malicious gossip of a foolish, personal kind it does no good but it hurts people's feelings (3) It may be malevolent slander or libel, it is intended deliberately to cause harm to people's reputation or injure them in other ways and is rightly punishable under all laws (4) It may be a public rebuke or correction or remonstrance without malice (1) (2) and (3) are absolutely forbidden (4) may be by a person in authority in which case the exception applies for all wrong or injustice must be corrected openly to prevent its recurrence Or (4) may be by a person not vested with authority but acting either from motives of public spirit or in order to help some one who has been wronged here again the exception will apply But if the motive is different the exception does not apply (4) would also include a public complaint by a person who has suffered a wrong he has every right to seek public redress

655 *Qadār* I have translated it more fully than most translators The root *qadara* not only implies power ability strength but two other ideas which it is difficult to convey in a single word, viz, the act and power of estimating the true value of a thing or persons, as in vi 91 and the act and power of regulating something so as to bring it into correspondence with something Judgment of values I think sums up these finer shades of meaning God forgives what is wrong and is able fully to appreciate and judge of the value of our good deeds whether we publish them or conceal them

656 Unbelief takes various forms Three are mentioned here (1) denial of God and His revelation to mankind through inspired men (2) a sort of nominal belief in God and His apostles, but one which is partial, and mixed up with racial pride which does not allow of the recognition of any apostles beyond those of a particular race and (3) a nominal belief in universal revelation but so hedged round with peculiar doctrines of exclusive salvation that it practically approaches to a denial of God's universal love for all mankind and all Creation All three amount to Unbelief, for they really deny God's universal love and care



And We have prepared  
For Unbelievers a humiliating  
Punishment

- 152 To those who believe  
In God and His apostles  
And make no distinction  
Between any of the apostles,  
We shall soon give  
Their (due) rewards  
For God is Oft-forgiving,  
Most Merciful

وَاحْتَدْنَا لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابًا مُهِينًا ۝

۱۵۲- وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ  
وَلَمْ يُفَرِّقُوا بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِّنْهُمْ  
أُولَٰئِكَ سَوْفَ يُؤْتِيهِمْ أَجْرُهُمْ  
وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا ۝

C 68 —The People of the Book went wrong  
(iv 153 176) The Jews in breaking their Covenant,  
And slandering Mary and Jesus,  
And in their usury and injustice,  
And the Christians in raising  
Jesus the Apostle to equality  
With God God's revelation  
Is continued in the Qur'an,  
Which comes with manifest proof  
And a clear light to those who understand

## SECTION 22

- 153 The People of the Book  
Ask thee to cause  
A book to descend to them  
From heaven indeed  
They asked Moses  
For an even greater  
(Miracle), for they said  
"Show us God in public," 657  
But they were dazed  
For their presumption,  
With thunder and lightning  
Yet they worshipped the calf  
Even after Clear Signs  
Had come to them,  
Even so We forgave them,  
And gave Moses manifest  
Proofs of authority

۱۵۳- يَسْأَلُكَ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ أَنْ تَنزِلَ عَلَيْهِمْ  
كِتَابًا مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ  
فَقَدْ سَأَلُوا مُوسَىٰ أَكْبَرَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ  
فَقَالُوا أَرِنَا اللَّهَ جَهْرَةً  
فَأَخَذَتْهُمُ الصَّعِقَةُ بِظُلْمِهِمْ  
ثُمَّ اتَّخَذُوا الْعِجْلَ مِن بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَهُمْ  
الْبَيِّنَاتُ فَعَفَوْنَا عَنْ ذَلِكَ  
وَآتَيْنَا مُوسَىٰ سُلْطَانًا مُّبِينًا ۝

657 Cf u 55, for the thunder and lightning which dazed those who were presumptuous enough to ask that they should see God face to face and u. 51 and u 66, for the worship of the golden calf

The lesson is that it is presumptuous on the part of man to judge of spiritual things in terms of material things or to ask to see God with their material eyes when God is above material forms and is independent of time and space

154 And for their Covenant  
We raised over them  
(The towering height)  
Of Mount (Sinai).<sup>658</sup>  
And (on another occasion)  
We said. "Enter the gate  
With humility", and (once again)  
We commanded them  
"Transgress not in the matter  
Of the Sabbath"  
And We took from them  
A solemn Covenant.

١٥٢- وَرَفَعْنَا فَوْقَهُمُ الطُّورَ  
بِمِيثَاقِهِمْ  
وَقُلْنَا لَهُمْ ادْخُلُوا الْبَابَ  
سُجَّدًا  
وَقُلْنَا لَهُمْ لَا تَعْدُوا فِي السَّبْتِ  
وَآخَذْنَا مِنْهُمْ مِيثَاقًا غَلِيظًا ٥

155 (They have incurred divine<sup>659</sup>  
Displeasure) in that they  
Broke their Covenant,  
That they rejected the Signs  
Of God, that they slew  
The Messengers in defiance<sup>660</sup>  
Of right, that they said,  
"Our hearts are the wrappings"<sup>661</sup>  
(Which preserve God's Word,  
We need no more)",—nay,  
God hath set the seal on their hearts  
For their blasphemy,  
And little is it they believe,—

١٥٥- فِيمَا نَقُضُهُمْ مِيثَاقَهُمْ  
وَكُفِّرُهُمْ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ  
وَقَتْلِهِمُ الرُّسُلَ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ  
وَقَوْلِهِمْ قُلُوبُنَا غُلْفٌ  
بَلْ طَبَعَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهَا بِكُفْرِهِمْ  
فَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ٥

156 That they rejected Faith,  
That they uttered against Mary

١٥٦- وَبِكُفْرِهِمْ وَقَوْلِهِمْ عَلَى مَرْيَمَ

658 In this verse there is a recapitulation of three salient incidents of Jewish refractoriness already referred to in the second Sūra viz (1) the Covenant under the towering height of Sinai 11 63 (2) their arrogance where they were commanded humility in entering a town 11 58 and (3) their transgression of the Sabbath 11 65

659 In verses 155 156 157 160 (latter half) and 161 with parenthetical clauses including those in verses 158 159 and 160 (first half) there is a catalogue of the iniquities of which the Jews were guilty and for these iniquities we must understand some such words as They are under divine displeasure Each clause of the indictment I have indicated by prefixing the word that

660 Cf 111 21 and nn 363 and 364

661 Cf 11 88 and n 92 where the full meaning is explained

Note the crescendo (heightening effect) in the argument Their iniquities were (1) that they broke their Covenant, (2) that they rejected God's guidance as conveyed in His Signs (3) that they killed God's Messengers and incurred a double guilt viz that of murder and that of a deliberate defiance of God's law and (4) that they imagined themselves arrogantly self sufficient, which means a blasphemous closing of their hearts for ever against the admission of God's grace Then begins another series of iniquities from a different point of view (1) that they rejected Faith, (2) that they made false charges against a saintly woman like Mary, who was chosen by God to be the mother of Jesus, (3) that they boasted of having killed Jesus when they were victims of their own self hallucination, (4) that they hindered people from God's way, and (5) that by means of usury and fraud they oppressed their fellow-men

A grave false charge , <sup>662</sup>

- 157 That they said (in boast),  
 " We killed Christ Jesus  
 The son of Mary,  
 The Apostle of God " ,—  
 But they killed him not,  
 Nor crucified him, <sup>663</sup>  
 But so it was made  
 To appear to them,  
 And those who differ  
 Therein are full of doubts,  
 With no (certain) knowledge,  
 But only conjecture to follow,  
 For of a surety  
 They killed him not ,—

- 158 Nay, God raised him up <sup>664</sup>  
 Unto Himself , and God  
 Is Exalted in Power, Wise ,—

- 159 And there is none  
 Of the People of the Book

بُهْتَانًا عَظِيمًا ۝

١٥٧- وَقَوْلُهُمْ إِنَّا قَتَلْنَا الْمَسِيحَ عِيسَى  
 ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ  
 وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ وَمَا صَلَبُوهُ وَلَكِنْ شُبِّهَ لَهُمْ  
 وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ  
 لَفِي شَكٍّ مِنْهُ مِمَّا لَمْ يَكُنْ عَلَيْهِمْ  
 إِلَّا اتِّبَاعُ الظَّنِّ  
 وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ يَقِينًا ۝

١٥٨- بَلْ رَفَعَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَيْهِ  
 وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا ۝

١٥٩- وَإِنْ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ

662 The false charge against Mary was that she was unchaste Cf xix 27 28 Such a charge is bad enough to make against any woman but to make it against Mary the mother of Jesus was to bring into ridicule God's power itself Islam is specially strong in guarding the reputation of women Slanderers of women are bound to bring four witnesses in support of their accusations and if they fail to produce four witnesses they are to be flogged with eighty stripes and debarred for ever from being competent witnesses xxiv 4

663 The end of the life of Jesus on earth is as much involved in mystery as his birth and indeed the greater part of his private life except the three main years of his ministry It is not profitable to discuss the many doubts and conjectures among the early Christian sects and among Muslim theologians The Orthodox Christian Churches make it a cardinal point of their doctrine that his life was taken on the Cross that he died and was buried that on the third day he rose in the body with his wounds intact and walked about and conversed and ate with his disciples and was afterwards taken up bodily to heaven This is necessary for the theological doctrine of blood sacrifice and vicarious atonement for sins which is rejected by Islam But some of the early Christian sects did not believe that Christ was killed on the Cross The Basilidans believed that some one else was substituted for him The Docetae held that Christ never had a real physical or natural body but only an apparent or phantom body and that his Crucifixion was only apparent not real The Marcionite Gospel (about A D 138) denied that Jesus was born and merely said that he appeared in human form The Gospel of St Barnabas supported the theory of substitution on the Cross The Quranic teaching is that Christ was not crucified nor killed by the Jews notwithstanding certain apparent circumstances which produced that illusion in the minds of some of his enemies that disputations doubts and conjectures on such matters are vain , and that he was taken up to God (see next verse and note)

664 There is difference of opinion as to the exact interpretation of this verse The words are The Jews did not kill Jesus but God raised him up (rafa'a) to Himself One school holds that Jesus did not die the usual human death, but still lives in the body in heaven , another holds that he did die (v 120) but not when he was supposed to be crucified, and that his being raised up unto God means that instead of being disgraced as a malefactor as the Jews intended, he was on the contrary honoured by God as His Apostle see also next verse The same word rafa'a is used in association with honour in connection with Mustafa in xciv 4



## SECTION 23

163 **W**e have sent thee  
Inspiration, as We sent it  
To Noah and the Messengers<sup>668</sup>  
After him. We sent  
Inspiration to Abraham,<sup>669</sup>  
Ismā'il, Isaac, Jacob  
And the Tribes, to Jesus,  
Job, Jonah, Aaron, and Solomon,  
And to David We gave  
The Psalms

164 Of some apostles We have  
Already told thee the story,  
Of others we have not,—  
And to Moses God spoke  
direct,—<sup>670</sup>

165 Apostles who gave good news<sup>671</sup>  
As well as warning,  
That mankind, after (the coming)  
Of the apostles, should have  
No plea against God  
For God is Exalted in Power,  
Wise

166 **B**ut God beareth witness  
That what He hath sent  
Unto thee He hath sent  
From His (own) knowledge,<sup>672</sup>

١٦٣- إِنَّا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ  
كَمَا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَى نُوحٍ وَالْتِيمَن مِنْ بَعْدِهِ  
وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ  
وَيَعْقُوبَ وَالْأَسْبَاطِ وَعِيسَى وَأَيُّوبَ وَ  
يُونُسَ وَهَارُونَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ وَآتَيْنَا دَاوُدَ زَبُورًا

١٦٤- وَرُسُلًا قَدْ قَصَصْنَاهُمْ عَلَيْكَ مِنْ  
قَبْلُ وَرُسُلًا لَمْ نَقْصُصْهُمْ عَلَيْكَ  
وَكَلَّمَ اللَّهُ مُوسَى تَكْلِيمًا

١٦٥- رُسُلًا مُبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنذِرِينَ لِيَكُنَ  
يَكُونُ لِلنَّاسِ عَلَى اللَّهِ حُجَّةٌ  
بَعْدَ الرُّسُلِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا

١٦٦- لَكِنِ اللَّهُ يَشْهَدُ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْكَ  
أَنْزَلَهُ بِعِلْمِهِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ يَشْهَدُونَ

668 First we have a general statement that inspiration was sent to many Messengers and the inspiration was of the same kind as that sent to the Apostle Muhammad for God's Message is one. Note that what is spoken of here is Inspiration not necessarily a Book. Every nation or group of people had an apostle x 47. Some of these apostles have been mentioned by name in the Qur'an, and some not iv 164.

669 Cf ii 136 and iii 84. The list here given is in three groups (1) The first group Abraham's family, is the same as in ii 136 (where see the note) and in iii 84. (2) Then we have the tragic figures of Jesus, Job and Jonah whose mission was from a worldly point of view unsuccessful. (3) Then we have Aaron the priest and Solomon the King, both great figures but each subordinate to another primary figure viz., Moses (mentioned in the next verse) and David (mentioned at the end of this verse). David's distinction was the Psalms which are still extant. Though their present form may possibly be different from the original and they do undoubtedly include Psalms not written by David the collection contains much devotional poetry of a high order.

670 God spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai through a cloud Exod xxxiv 5. Hence the title of Moses in Muslim theology *Kalīm ullāh* the one to whom God spoke.

671 Every apostle proclaims God's goodness to the righteous and forgiveness to those who repent (good news) and the Wrath to come for those who reject Faith and live in iniquity (warning). Their mission of warning is a prelude and complement to their mission of good news. No one can then say that he or she did not know.

672 Inspiration though it is clothed in human language, and shaped to the personality of the inspired one, proceeds from the knowledge of God, and therefore often contains more meaning than the inspired one himself realises.

And the angels bear witness  
But enough is God for a witness

167 Those who reject Faith  
And keep off (men)  
From the Way of God,  
Have verily strayed far,  
Far away from the Path

168 Those who reject Faith  
And do wrong,—God  
Will not forgive them  
Nor guide them  
To any way—

169 Except the way of Hell,  
To dwell therein for ever  
And this to God is easy <sup>673</sup>

170 O mankind! the Apostle  
Hath come to you in truth  
From God believe in him  
It is best for you <sup>674</sup> But if  
Ye reject Faith, to God  
Belong all things in the heavens  
And on earth and God  
Is All-knowing, All wise

171 O People of the Book!  
Commit no excesses <sup>675</sup>  
In your religion nor say  
Of God aught but the truth

وَكُفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا ۝

١٦٧-إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَصَدُّوا عَنْ  
سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ  
قَدْ ضَلُّوا ضَلَالًا بَعِيدًا ۝

١٦٨-إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَظَلَمُوا  
لَمْ يَكُنِ اللَّهُ لِيَغْفِرَ لَهُمْ  
وَلَا يَهْدِيَهُمْ طَرِيقًا ۝

١٦٩-إِلَّا طَرِيقَ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا  
وَكَانَ ذَلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرًا ۝

١٧٠-يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ الرَّسُولُ  
بِالْحَقِّ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ فَأَمِنُوا خَيْرًا لَكُمْ وَإِنْ  
تَكْفُرُوا فَإِنَّ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمُوتِ وَالْأَرْضِ  
وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ۝

١٧١-يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لَا تَغْلُوا فِي دِينِكُمْ  
وَلَا تَقُولُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ إِلَّا الْحَقَّ ۝

673 *Easy*—not in the sense that God takes any pleasure in any of His creatures going astray. The contrary is the case for God's Grace recognises all good in us to such an extent that it is compared to gratitude in iv 147, see n 653. We must understand *easy* in the sense that God is Supreme in knowledge and power: if any forces of rebellion foolishly think that they can evade punishment they are mistaken. Punishment comes as a matter of course. It is not a matter of difficulty or exertion on the part of God.

674 God's solicitude for us is for our own good, not because He gets any advantage from it. For He is independent of all things and everything declares His glory and praise.

675 Just as a foolish servant may go wrong by excess of zeal for his master, so in religion people's excesses may lead them to blasphemy or a spirit the very opposite of religion. The Jewish excesses in the direction of formalism, racialism, exclusiveness, and rejection of Christ Jesus have been denounced in many places. Here the Christian attitude is condemned, which raises Jesus to an equality with God, in some cases venerates Mary almost to idolatry, attributes a physical son to God, and invents the doctrine of the Trinity, opposed to all reason, which according to the Athanasian Creed, unless a man believes, he is doomed to hell for ever. Let our Muslims also beware lest they fall into excesses either in doctrine or in formalism.

Christ Jesus the son of Mary  
Was (no more than)  
An apostle of God,  
And His Word,  
Which He bestowed on Mary;  
And a Spirit proceeding  
From Him so believe  
In God and His apostles  
Say not "Trinity" desist <sup>676</sup>  
It will be better for you  
For God is One God  
Glory be to Him  
(Far Exalted is He) above  
Having a son To Him  
Belong all things in the heavens  
And on earth And enough  
Is God as a Disposer of affairs

## SECTION 24

172 Christ disdaineth not  
To serve and worship God, <sup>677</sup>  
Nor do the angels, those  
Nearest (to God)  
Those who disdain  
His worship and are arrogant,—  
He will gather them all  
Together unto Himself <sup>678</sup>  
To (answer)

173 But to those who believe  
And do deeds of righteousness,  
He will give their (due)  
Rewards,—and more,  
Out of His bounty  
But those who are  
Disdainful and arrogant,  
He will punish

إِنَّمَا الْمَسِيحُ عَيْسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ  
رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَكَلِمَتُهُ  
الْقَهْطُ إِلَى مَرْيَمَ وَرُوحٌ مِنْهُ  
فَامْنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَلَا تَقُولُوا ثَلَاثَ  
إِنْتَهُمْ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ  
إِنَّمَا اللَّهُ إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ  
سُبْحَنَهُ أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُ وَلَدٌ  
لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ  
وَكُفَى بِاللَّهِ وَكِيلًا

١٤٢ - لَنْ يَسْتَنْكَفَ الْمَسِيحُ  
أَنْ يَكُونَ عَبْدًا لِلَّهِ  
وَلَا الْمَلَائِكَةُ الْمُقَرَّبُونَ  
وَمَنْ يَسْتَنْكَفَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِهِ وَيَسْتَكْبِرْ  
فَسَيُخْشَرُهُمُ إِلَيْهِ جَمِيعًا

١٤٣ - فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ  
فَيُؤْتِيهِمْ أَجُورَهُمْ  
وَيَزِيدُهُمْ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ  
وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ اسْتَنْكَفُوا وَاسْتَكْبَرُوا

676 Christ's attributes are mentioned (1) that he was the son of a woman Mary, and therefore a man, (2) but an apostle a man with a mission from God and therefore entitled to honour (3) a Word bestowed on Mary for he was created by God's word Be (*kun*) and he was in 59, (4) a spirit proceeding from God but not God his life and his mission were more limited than in the case of some other apostles though we must pay equal honour to him as a man of God. The doctrines of Trinity equality with God and sonship are repudiated as blasphemies. God is independent of all needs and has no need of a son to manage His affairs. The Gospel of John (whoever wrote it) has put in a great deal of Alexandrian and Gnostic mysticism round the doctrine of the Word (Greek *Logos*), but it is simply explained here and our Sūfis work on this explanation.

677 Christ often watched and prayed as a humble worshipper of God and his agony in the Garden of Gethsemane was full of human dignity suffering and self humiliation (see Matt xxvi 36-43)

678 The disdainful and the arrogant are the crew of Satan, who will be gathered together before the Supreme Throne for punishment.

With a grievous penalty,  
Nor will they find,  
Besides God, any  
To protect or help them

فِيَعِدُّ لَهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا وَلَا يَجِدُونَ  
لَهُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَلِيًّا وَلَا نَصِيرًا ٥

174 O mankind! Verily  
There hath come to you  
A convincing proof  
From your Lord  
For We have sent unto you  
A light (that is) manifest<sup>679</sup>

١٧٤- يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ بُرْهَانٌ  
مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ  
وَأَنزَلْنَا إِلَيْكُمْ نُورًا مُّبِينًا ٥

175 Then those who believe  
In God, and hold fast  
To Him,—soon will He  
Admit them to Mercy  
And Grace from Himself,<sup>680</sup>  
And guide them to Himself  
By a straight Way

١٧٥- فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ  
وَاعْتَصَمُوا بِهِ  
فَسَيُدْخِلُهُمْ فِي رَحْمَةٍ مِّنْهُ وَفَضْلٍ  
وَيَهْدِي لَهُمْ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ ٥

176 They ask thee  
For a legal decision  
Say God directs (thus)  
About those who leave  
No descendants or ascendants  
As heirs If it is a man<sup>681</sup>  
That dies, leaving a sister  
But no child, she shall

١٧٦- يَسْتَفْتُونَكَ  
قُلِ اللَّهُ يُفْتِيكُمْ فِي الْكَلَالَةِ  
إِنْ أَمْرُوْهُمَا هَلَكَ لَيْسَ لَهُ وَلَدٌ  
وَلَهُ أُخْتُ فَلَهَا

679 The Proof and the Light are the Qur'an and the Personality Life and Teaching of Muhammad Mustafa

680 From Himself = From His Presence see iii 195 and n 501 The Mercy and Grace are expressed here as specially flowing from Him

681 This verse supplements the rule of inheritance to the estate of a deceased person who has left as heir neither a descendant nor an ascendant We shall call such a person A who may be either a male or a female In iv 12 (second half) A's case was considered where he had left uterine brothers or sisters Here A's case is considered where he has left brothers and/or sisters by the father's side whether the mother was the same or not Brothers and sisters in this verse must be construed to be such brothers and sisters

For the sake of clearness I have expanded the terse language of the original in the translation Let me explain it more concretely in this note A and brother and sister being strictly defined as above, we proceed to consider how A's inheritance would be divided If A left a widow or widower the widow's or widower's share would first be calculated as in the first half of iv 12 if A left no spouse this calculation would not be necessary Then if A left a single sister she would have a half share the remaining half (in so far as it or a part of it does not fall to a spouse if any) going to remoter heirs if a single 'brother' he would have the whole (subject to the spouse's right if there is a spouse) if more than one "brother" they divide the whole (subject to etc) If A left two or more "sisters" they get between them two thirds subject to the spouse's right if any If A left a "brother and 'sister" or "brothers and "sisters" they divide on the basis that each "brother's" share is twice that of the sister (subject to etc) In all cases debts, funeral expenses, and legacies (to the amount allowed) have priority as in n 522



Have half the inheritance  
 If (such a deceased was)  
 A woman, who left no child,  
 Her brother takes her inheritance  
 If there are two sisters,  
 They shall have two thirds  
 Of the inheritance  
 (Between them) if there are  
 Brothers and sisters, (they share),  
 The male having twice  
 The share of the female  
 Thus doth God make clear  
 To you (His law), lest  
 Ye err And God  
 Hath knowledge of all things

نَصَبْتُ مَا تَرَكَ  
 وَهُوَ يَرِثُهَا  
 إِنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ لَهَا وَلَدٌ  
 فَإِنْ كَانَتَا اثْنَتَيْنِ  
 فَلَهُمَا الثُّلُثَيْنِ مِمَّا تَرَكَ وَإِنْ كَانُوا إِخْوَةً  
 رِجَالًا وَنِسَاءً فَلِلذَّكَرِ مِثْلُ حَظِّ الْأُنثَيَيْنِ  
 يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ أَنْ تَحِلُّوا  
 وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ

ع



## INTRODUCTION TO SŪRA V (*Māida*)

This Sūra deals, by way of recapitulation, with the backsliding of the Jews and Christians from their pure religions, to which the coping stone was placed by Islam. It refers particularly to the Christians, and to their solemn Sacrament of the Last Supper, to whose mystic meaning they are declared to have been false.

As a logical corollary to the corruption of the earlier religions of God, the practical precepts of Islam, about food, cleanliness, justice, and fidelity are recapitulated.

The fourth verse contains the memorable declaration "This day have I perfected your religion for you" which was promulgated in 10 H, during the Apostle's last Pilgrimage to Mecca. Chronologically it was the last verse to be revealed.

**Summary**—Beginning with an appeal to fulfil, as sacred, all obligations, human and divine, it points to certain regulations about food, as conducive to a sober and social life, without superstition and without bias or hatred (v 16, and C 69).

Cleanliness of body, and justice and uprightness of dealing are nearest to Piety (v 7-12, and C 70).

If the Jews and the Christians turned back from the Truth and violated their Covenants, they have had their warning (v 13-29, and C 71).

The murder of Abel by Cain is the type of the treatment which the just man suffers from the envious. There is punishment from God. The just man must not grieve (v 30-46, and C 72).

Muslims must do impartial justice, but must protect their own Brotherhood and their Faith from insult and scorn. They must appreciate piety, humility, and other good points among the Christians (v 47-89, and C 73).

They must enjoy with gratitude all that is good and lawful, but guard themselves against excess. Swearing, intoxication, gambling, violation of the Sanctuary, superstitions of all kinds, and false evidence are condemned (v 90-111, and C 74).

The miracles of Jesus, and how they were misused by those who bore his name (v 112-123, and C 75).

C 69 —All obligations are sacred, human  
(v 16) Or divine. In the spiritual world  
We owe duties to God, which must  
Be fulfilled. But whilst we are  
In this world of sense, those duties  
Are by no means isolated  
From what we owe to ourselves  
And our fellows in the world  
Of men. We must respect the laws  
And customs of the Sacred Mosque  
And the Sacred Sanctuary  
In food our laws are simple  
All things good and pure are lawful  
We refuse not social intercourse  
With men and women,—  
People of the Book

## Sūra V

## Ma'ida, or The Table Spread

*In the name of God, Most Gracious,  
Most Merciful*

1 **﴿﴾** ye who believe !  
Fulfil (all) obligations <sup>682</sup>

2 **﴿﴾** Lawful unto you (for food)  
Are all four footed animals,  
With the exceptions named <sup>683</sup>  
But animals of the chase  
Are forbidden while ye  
Are in the Sacred Precincts  
Or in pilgrim garb <sup>684</sup>  
For God doth command  
According to His Will and Plan <sup>685</sup>

3 O ye who believe !  
Violate not the sanctity



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَوْفُوا بِالْعُقُودِ

۲- أُحِلَّ لَكُمْ بَهِيمَةُ الْأَنْعَامِ  
إِلَّا مَا يُنْتَلَى عَلَيْكُمْ غَيْرِ مُحِلِّي الصَّيْدِ  
وَأَنْتُمْ حُرُمٌ  
إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَخْتَصُمُ مَا يَرِيدُ

۳- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَحِلُّوا

682 This line has been justly admired for its terseness and comprehensiveness. Obligations *uqud* the Arabic word implies so many things that a whole chapter of Commentary can be written on it. First there are the divine obligations that arise from our spiritual nature and our relation to God. He created us and implanted in us the faculty of knowledge and foresight besides the intuition and reason which He gave us. He made Nature responsive to our needs and His Signs in Nature are so many lessons to us in our own inner life. He further sent Messengers and Teachers, for the guidance of our conduct in individual social and public life. All these gifts create corresponding obligations which we must fulfil. But in our own human and material life we undertake mutual obligations express and implied. We make a promise we enter into a commercial or social contract, we enter into a contract of marriage we must faithfully fulfil all obligations in all these relationships. Our group or our State enters into a treaty every individual in that group or State is bound to see that as far as lies in his power such obligations are faithfully discharged. There are tacit obligations living in civil society, we must respect its tacit conventions unless they are morally wrong and in that case we must get out of such society. There are tacit obligations in the characters of host and guest wayfarer or companion employer or employed etc etc, which every man of Faith must discharge conscientiously. The man who deserts those who need him and goes to pray in a desert is a coward who disregards his obligations. All these obligations are inter connected. Truth and fidelity are parts of religion in all relations of life.

This verse is numbered separately from the succeeding verses by Hāsiz Uthmān and the Faṭḥ ur Raḥmān. As it forms a paragraph or chapter by itself, I have followed that numbering throughout this Sūra, thus reluctantly diverging from the numbering in the edition of the *Aḥḥam i Ḥimāyat i Islām* throughout this chapter.

683 See v 4 below

684 Cf v 97 99. Hunting and the use of game are forbidden " while ye are *ḥurumun* i.e. while ye are (1) in the Sacred Precincts or (2) in the special pilgrim garb (*iḥrām*), as to which see n 212 u 196. In most cases the two amount to the same thing. The Sacred Precincts are sanctuary both for man and beast.

685 God's commands are not arbitrary. His Will is the perfect Archetype or Plan of the world. Everything He wills has regard to His Plan, in which are reflected His perfect wisdom and goodness.

Of the Symbols of God,<sup>686</sup>  
 Nor of the Sacred Month,<sup>687</sup>  
 Nor of the animals brought  
 For sacrifice, nor the garlands  
 That mark out such animals,  
 Nor the people resorting  
 To the Sacred House,<sup>688</sup>  
 Seeking of the bounty  
 And good pleasure  
 Of their Lord  
 But when ye are clear  
 Of the Sacred Precincts<sup>689</sup>  
 And of pilgrim garb,  
 Ye may hunt  
 And let not the hatred  
 Of some people  
 In (once) shutting you out  
 Of the Sacred Mosque  
 Lead you to transgression  
 (And hostility on your part)<sup>690</sup>  
 Help ye one another  
 In righteousness and piety,  
 But help ye not one another  
 In sin and rancour  
 Fear God for God  
 Is strict in punishment

شَعَائِرَ اللَّهِ وَلَا الشَّهْرَ الْحَرَامَ  
 وَلَا الْهَدْيَ وَلَا الْقَلَائِدَ  
 وَلَا آمِينَ الْبَيْتِ الْحَرَامِ  
 يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ وَرِضْوَانًا  
 وَإِذَا حَلَلْتُمْ فَاصْطَادُوا  
 وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَا نُ قَوْمٍ  
 أَنْ صَدَّكُمْ  
 عَنِ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ  
 أَنْ تَعْتَدُوا  
 وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَى  
 وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ  
 وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ  
 إِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ٢

4 Forbidden to you (for food)  
 Are ' dead meat, blood,

٢- حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَيْتَةُ وَالدَّمُ

686 Cf n 158 where Ṣafā and Marwa are called Symbols (*sha'ā'ir*) of God. Here the Symbols are everything connected with the Pilgrimage viz (1) the places (like Ṣafā and Marwa or the Ka'ba or Arafāt etc.) (2) the rites and ceremonies prescribed (3) prohibitions (such as that of hunting etc.) (4) the times and seasons prescribed. There is spiritual and moral symbolism in all these. See notes on n 158 n 194 200

687 The month of pilgrimage or else collectively the four sacred months (ix 36) viz Rajab (7th) Zul qā d (11th) Zul ḥajj (12th the month of Pilgrimage) and Muḥarram (the first of the year). In all these months War was prohibited. Excepting Rajab the other three months are consecutive.

688 The immunity from attack or interference extended to the animals brought as offerings for sacrifice and the garlands or fillets or distinguishing marks which gave them immunity. They were treated as sacred symbols. And of course every protection or immunity was enjoyed by the Pilgrims.

689 This is the state opposite to that described in n 684 i.e. when ye have left the Sacred Precincts, and have doffed the special pilgrim garb, showing your return to ordinary life.

690 See n 205 to n 191. In the sixth year of the Hijra the Pagans, by way of hatred and persecution of the Muslims, had prevented them from access to the Sacred Mosque. When the Muslims were re established in Mecca some of them wanted to retaliate and exclude the Pagans or in some way to interfere with them in the Pilgrimage. This is condemned. Passing from the immediate event to the general principle, we must not retaliate or return evil for evil. The hatred of the wicked does not justify hostility on our part. We have to help each other in righteousness and piety, not in perpetuating feuds of hatred and enmity. We may have to fight and put down evil, but never in a spirit of malice or hatred but always in a spirit of justice and righteousness.

The flesh of swine, and that  
On which hath been invoked  
The name of other than God ,<sup>691</sup>  
That which hath been  
Killed by strangling,  
Or by a violent blow,  
Or by a headlong fall,  
Or by being gored to death,  
That which hath been (partly)  
Eaten by a wild animal,  
Unless ye are able  
To slaughter it (in due form),<sup>692</sup>  
That which is sacrificed<sup>693</sup>  
On stone (altars),  
(Forbidden) also is the division<sup>694</sup>  
(Of meat) by raffling  
With arrows that is impiety

**T**his day have those who  
Reject Faith given up  
All hope of your religion<sup>695</sup>  
Yet fear them not  
But fear Me  
This day have I  
Perfected your religion<sup>696</sup>  
For you, completed  
My favour upon you,  
And have chosen for you  
Islam as your religion

But if any is forced  
By hunger, with no inclination  
To transgression, God is  
Indeed Oft-forgiving,  
Most Merciful

وَلَحْمُ الْخِنْزِيرِ وَمَا أُهِلَّ لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ بِهِ  
وَالْمُنْفِقَةُ  
وَالْمُوقُذَةُ  
وَالْمُتَرَدِّيَةُ  
وَالنَّطِيجَةُ  
وَمَا أَكَلَ السَّبْعُ إِلَّا مَا ذُكِّرْتُمْ  
وَمَا دُبِجَ عَلَى النُّصَبِ  
وَأَنْ تَسْتَقِيمُوا بِالْأَزْلَامِ  
ذَلِكُمْ فَسْقٌ

الْيَوْمَ يَنْسُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ دِينِكُمْ  
فَلَا تَخْشَوْهُمْ وَاخْشَوْنِ  
الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ  
وَأَتَمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي  
وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا  
فَمَنْ اضْطُرَّ فِي مَخْرَجٍ غَيْرِ مُحَارِفٍ  
لَا إِثْمَ  
وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ○

691 Cf n 173 and nn 173 and 174 The prohibition of dead meat blood the flesh of swine and that on which other names than that of God has been invoked has been there explained

692 If an animal dies by strangling or by a violent blow or a headlong fall or by being gored to death or by being attacked by a wild animal the presumption is that it becomes carrion as the life blood is congealed before being taken out of the body But the presumption can be rebutted If the life blood still flows and the solemn mode of slaughter (*zabih*) in the name of God as a sacrifice is carried out it becomes lawful as food

693 This was also an idolatrous rite different from that in which a sacrifice was devoted to a particular idol or a false god

694 Gambling of all kinds is forbidden n 291 A sort of lottery or raffle practised by Pagan Arabs has been described in n 241 Division of meat in this way is here forbidden as it is a form of gambling

695 So long as Islam was not organised with its own community and its own laws, the Unbelievers had hoped to wean the Believers from the new Teaching Now that hope was gone, with the complete organisation of Islam

696 The last verse revealed chronologically, marking the approaching end of Mustafā's ministry in his earthly life

5 They ask thee what is  
Lawful to them (as food) <sup>697</sup>  
Say Lawful unto you  
Are (all) things good and pure  
And what ye have taught  
Your trained hunting animals  
(To catch) in the manner  
Directed to you by God  
Eat what they catch for you, <sup>698</sup>  
But pronounce the name  
Of God over it and fear  
God, for God is swift  
In taking account

6 This day are (all) things  
Good and pure made lawful  
Unto you The food  
Of the People of the Book <sup>699</sup>  
Is lawful unto you  
And yours is lawful  
Unto them  
(Lawful unto you in marriage)  
Are (not only) chaste women  
Who are believers, but  
Chaste women among  
The People of the Book, <sup>700</sup>

هـ- يَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا أُحِلَّ لَهُمْ  
قُلْ أُحِلَّ لَكُمْ الطَّيِّبَاتُ  
وَمَا عَلَّمْتُمْ مِنَ الْجَوَارِحِ مُكَلِّبِينَ  
تَعْلَمُونَ لَهُنَّ مِمَّا عَلَّمَكُمُ اللَّهُ  
فَكُلُوا مِمَّا أَمْسَكَنَّ عَلَيْكُمْ  
وَادْكُرُوا السَّمَاءَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَانْقُوا اللَّهَ  
إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ ○

٦- الْيَوْمَ أُحِلَّ لَكُمْ الطَّيِّبَاتُ  
وَطَعَامُ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ  
لَكُمْ  
وَطَعَامُكُمْ جِلَّ لَهُمْ  
وَالْمُحْصَنَاتُ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ  
وَالْمُحْصَنَاتُ مِنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ

697 The previous verse was negative it defined what was not lawful for food, viz things gross or disgusting or dedicated to superstition This verse is positive it defines what is lawful viz all things that are good and pure

698 In the matter of the killing for meat the general rule is that the name of the true God should be pronounced as a rite in order to call our attention to the fact that we do not take life thoughtlessly but solemnly for food with the permission of God to whom we render the life back The question of hunting is then raised How can this solemn rite be performed when we send forth trained hawks trained hounds or trained cheetahs or other animals trained for the chase? They must necessarily kill at some distance from their masters Their game is legalised on these conditions (1) that they are trained to kill not merely for their own appetite or out of mere wantonness but for their master's food the training implies that something of the solemnity which God has taught us in this matter goes into their action and (2) we are to pronounce the name of God over the quarry this is interpreted to mean that the *Takbīr* should be pronounced when the hawk or dog etc. is released to the quarry

699 The question is for food generally such as is ordinarily 'good and pure' in the matter of meat it should be killed with some sort of solemnity analogous to that of the *Takbīr* The rules of Islam in this respect being analogous to those of the People of the Book there is no objection to mutual recognition as opposed to meat killed by Pagans with superstitious rites In this respect the Christian rule is the same That ye abstain from meats offered to idols and from blood and from things strangled and from fornication (Acts xv 29) Notice the bracketing of fornication with things unlawful to eat

700 Islam is not exclusive Social intercourse including inter-marriage is permitted with the People of the Book A Muslim man may marry a woman from their ranks on the same terms as he would marry a Muslim woman i.e. he must give her an economic and moral status and must not be actuated merely by motives of lust or physical desire A Muslim woman may not marry a non Muslim man because her Muslim status would be affected the wife ordinarily takes the nationality and status given by her husband's law A non Muslim woman marrying a Muslim husband would be expected eventually to accept Islam Any man or woman of any race or faith may, on accepting Islam freely marry any Muslim woman or man provided it be from motives of purity and chastity and not of lewdness

Revealed before your time,—  
When ye give them  
Their due dowers, and desire  
Chastity, not lewdness,  
Nor secret intrigues  
If any one rejects faith,<sup>701</sup>  
Fruitless is his work,  
And in the Hereafter  
He will be in the ranks  
Of those who have lost  
(All spiritual good)

C 70 — God wishes us to be clean and pure,

(v 7 12) At prayer and at other times

But justice and right conduct,

Even in the face of spite and hatred,

Are nearest to Piety and the love

Of God in Him we put our trust

## SECTION 2

- 7 ﴿٧﴾ ye who believe !  
When ye prepare  
For prayer, wash<sup>702</sup>  
Your faces, and your hands  
(And arms) to the elbows ,  
Rub your heads (with water),  
And (wash) your feet  
To the ankles  
If ye are in a state  
Of ceremonial impurity,<sup>703</sup>  
Bathe your whole body  
But if ye are ill,  
Or on a journey,  
Or one of you cometh  
From offices of nature,  
Or ye have been  
In contact with women,  
And ye find no water,  
Then take for yourselves  
Clean sand or earth,<sup>704</sup>

مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ إِذَا آتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ  
أُجُورَهُنَّ مُحْصِينَ  
غَيْرَ مُسْفِحِينَ وَلَا مُتَّخِذِي أَخْدَانٍ  
وَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِالْإِيمَانِ فَقَدْ حَبِطَ عَمَلُهُ  
وَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ ۝

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا قُمْتُمْ إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ  
فَاغْسِلُوا وُجُوهَكُمْ وَأَيْدِيَكُمْ  
إِلَى الْمَرَافِقِ  
وَامْسَحُوا بِرُءُوسِكُمْ وَأَرْجُلَكُمْ إِلَى الْكَعْبَيْنِ  
وَأِنْ كُنْتُمْ جُنُبًا فَاطَّهَّرُوا  
وَأِنْ كُنْتُمْ مَرْضَى  
أَوْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ  
أَوْ جَاءَ أَحَدٌ مِنْكُمُ مِنَ الْغَائِطِ  
أَوْ لَمَسْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَلَمْ تَجِدُوا مَاءً  
فَتَيَمَّمُوا صَعِيدًا طَيِّبًا

701 As always, food cleanliness social intercourse marriage and other interests in life are linked with our duty to God and faith in Him Duty and faith are for our own benefit here and in the Hereafter

702 These are the essentials of Wudhū or ablutions preparatory to prayers, viz (1) to bathe the whole face in water and (2) both hands and arms to the elbows with (3) a little rubbing of the head with water (as the head is usually protected and comparatively clean) and (4) the bathing of the feet to the ankles In addition following the practice of the Apostle, it is usual first to wash the mouth the throat and the nose before proceeding with the face etc

703 Cf iv 43 and n 563 Ceremonial impurity arises from sex pollution

704 This is *Tayammum* or washing with clean sand or earth where water is not available I take it that this substitute is permissible both for Wudhū and for a full bath, in the circumstances mentioned

And rub therewith  
Your faces and hands.  
God doth not wish  
To place you in a difficulty,  
But to make you clean,  
And to complete  
His favour to you,  
That ye may be grateful

- 8 And call in remembrance  
The favour of God  
Unto you, and His Covenant,<sup>705</sup>  
Which He ratified  
With you, when ye said  
"We hear and we obey"  
And fear God, for God  
Knoweth well  
The secrets of your hearts

- 9 O ye who believe !  
Stand out firmly  
For God, as witnesses<sup>706</sup>  
To fair dealing, and let not  
The hatred of others  
To you make you swerve<sup>707</sup>  
To wrong and depart from  
Justice Be just that is  
Next to Piety and fear God  
For God is well-acquainted  
With all that ye do

- 10 To those who believe  
And do deeds of righteousness  
Hath God promised forgiveness  
And a great reward

فَاَمْسَحُوا بِوُجُوْهِكُمْ وَاَيْدِيكُمْ مِنْهُ  
مَا يَرْيدُ اللّٰهُ لِيَجْعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ حَرَجٍ  
وَلٰكِنْ يُرِيدُ لِيُطَهِّرَكُمْ  
وَلِيُنِمْ نِعْمَتَهُ عَلَيْكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُوْنَ

٨- وَاذْكُرُوا نِعْمَةَ اللّٰهِ عَلَيْكُمْ  
وَمِيثَاقَهُ الَّذِي وَاثَقَكُمْ بِهِ  
اِذْ قُلْتُمْ سَمِعْنَا وَاَطَعْنَا  
وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ

اِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَلِيْمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُوْرِ

٩- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُونُوا قَوِّمِينَ  
لِلّٰهِ شُهَدَاءَ بِالْقِسْطِ  
وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَاٰنُ قَوْمٍ عَلَىٰ اَلَّا  
تَعْدِلُوْا اِعْدِلُوْا هُوَ اَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوٰى  
وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ

اِنَّ اللّٰهَ خَبِيْرٌۢ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ

١٠- وَعَدَ اللّٰهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحٰتِ  
لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ وَّ اَجْرٌ عَظِيْمٌ

705 There is a particular and a general meaning The particular meaning refers to the solemn Pledge and Covenant taken by two groups of people at Aqaba a valley near Minā the first about fourteen months before the Hijra and the second a little later These were Pledges of fealty to the Apostle of God comparable to the Covenant under Mount Sinai taken in the time of Moses (See Q 11 63 and n 78) The general meaning has been explained in n 682 to v 1 man is under a spiritual obligation under an implied Covenant with God God has given man reason judgment, the higher faculties of the soul and even the position of God's vicegerent on earth (11 30) and man is bound to serve God faithfully and obey His Will That obedience begins with cleanliness in bodily functions, food etc It goes on to cleanliness of mind and thought, and culminates in purity of motives in the inmost recesses of his heart and soul

706 Cf iv 135

707 To do justice and act righteously in a favourable or neutral atmosphere is meritorious enough, but the real test comes when you have to do justice to people who hate you or to whom you have an aversion But no less is required of you by the higher moral law



11 Those who reject faith  
And deny Our Signs  
Will be Companions  
Of Hell-fire

۱۱- وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَكَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا  
أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْجَحِيمِ ۝

12 O ye who believe !  
Call in remembrance  
The favour of God  
Unto you when  
Certain men formed the design  
To stretch out  
Their hands against you,  
But (God) held back  
Their hands from you <sup>708</sup>  
So fear God And on God  
Let Believers put  
(All) their trust

۱۲- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اذْكُرُوا  
لِعِمَّتِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ  
إِذْ هَمَّ قَوْمٌ أَنْ يَبْسُطُوا إِلَيْكُمْ  
أَيْدِيَهُمْ فَكَفَّ أَيْدِيَهُمْ عَنْكُمْ  
وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ  
وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ۝

C 71 —If the men who received revelations  
( 13 29 ) Before were false to their trust,  
If they broke their agreements  
And twisted God's Message from its aim,  
If they rebelled against Truth and followed  
Their fancies, God's grace was withdrawn  
From them and they wandered in the wilderness

### SECTION 3

13 God did aforetime  
Take a Covenant from  
The Children of Israel, <sup>709</sup>  
And We appointed twelve  
Captains among them  
And God said " I am  
With you if ye (but)  
Establish regular Prayers,

۱۳- وَلَقَدْ أَخَذَ اللَّهُ مِيثَاقَ بَنِي إِسْرَٰئِيلَ  
وَبَعَثْنَا مِنْهُمُ اثْنَيْ عَشَرَ نَقِيبًا  
وَقَالَ اللَّهُ إِنِّي مَعَكُمْ  
لَئِنْ أَقَمْتُمُ الصَّلَاةَ

708 In the life time of the Apostle it happened again and again that the enemies of Islam stretched out their hands against the Apostle his people and his teaching The odds were from a worldly point of view, in their favour but their hands were rendered inert and powerless because they were fighting against the truth of God So does it happen always now as it did then True faith must take heart and at the same time humbly recognise God's favour and mercy and be grateful

709 Cf 11 63 and n 78 'Moses called for the elders of the people and all the people answered together and said, 'All that the Lord hath spoken we will do (Exod xix 7-8) This was under the towering height of Mount Sinai

The captains or elders or leaders of the people were selected one from each of the twelve tribes (see 11 60 and n 73) For census purposes the names of the elders of the tribes are given in Num 1 4-16 they are called "every one the head of the house of his fathers Later, twelve other "heads of the Children of Israel were selected to spy out the land of Canaan their names are mentioned in Num xiii 1-16 See also, below v 22 29 and notes.

Practise regular Charity,  
Believe in My apostles,  
Honour and assist them,  
And loan to God  
A beautiful loan,<sup>710</sup>  
Verily I will wipe out  
From you your evils,  
And admit you to Gardens  
With rivers flowing beneath,  
But if any of you, after this,  
Resisteth faith, he hath truly  
Wandered from the path  
Of rectitude "<sup>711</sup>

- 14 But because of their breach  
Of their Covenant, We  
Cursed them,<sup>712</sup> and made  
Their hearts grow hard  
They change the words  
From their (right) places  
And forget a good part  
Of the Message that was  
Sent them, nor wilt thou  
Cease to find them—  
Barring a few—ever  
Bent on (new) deceits <sup>713</sup>  
But forgive them, and overlook<sup>714</sup>  
(Their misdeeds) for God  
Loveth those who are kind

- 15 ~~From~~ From those, too who call  
Themselves Christians,

وَأَيُّكُمْ الزُّكُوَّةَ وَأَمَنْتُمْ بِرُسُلِي  
وَعَزَّزْتُمْهُمْ وَأَقْرَضْتُمُ اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا  
لَّا تَكْفُرَانِ عَنْكُمْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ  
وَلَا دُخِلَتْكُمْ جَنَّاتُ بَجْرِي  
مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ  
فَمَنْ كَفَرَ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ مِنْكُمْ  
فَقَدْ ضَلَّ سَوَاءَ السَّبِيلِ ○

١٤- فِيمَا نَقُضُوا مِنْ مِيثَاقِهِمْ لَعَنَّا  
وَجَعَلْنَا قُلُوبَهُمْ قَاسِيَةً  
يُحَدِّثُونَ الْكَلِمَ عَنْ مَوَاضِعِهِ  
وَنَسُوا حَظًّا مِمَّا ذُكِّرُوا بِهِ  
وَلَا تَزَالُ تَطَّلِعُ عَلَى خَائِنَةٍ مِنْهُمْ  
إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِنْهُمْ  
فَاعْفُ عَنْهُمْ وَاصْفَحْ  
إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ○

١٥- وَمِنَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّا نَصْرِي

710 Cf 11 245 n 276 The phrase means spending in the cause of God God in His infinite grace looks upon this as a loan for which He gives a recompense manifold

711 The path of rectitude or the even way see 11 108 n 109

712 Cursed them that means that because of the breach of their Covenant God withdrew His overflowing Grace from them. The withdrawal of Grace made their hearts grow hard in two ways (1) they were no longer protected from the assaults of evil and (2) they became impervious even to the message of forgiveness and mercy which is open to all God's creatures

713 Israel when it lost God's grace as above began to sin against truth and religion in three ways (1) they began to misuse Scripture itself by either taking words out of their right meaning or applying them to things for which they were never meant, (2) in doing so they conveniently forgot a part of the Message and purpose of God, and (3) they invented new deceits to support the old ones

714 Cf 11 109 and n 110, where I have explained the different shades of meaning in the words for "forgiveness"

We did take a Covenant,<sup>715</sup>  
 But they forgot a good part  
 Of the Message that was  
 Sent them so We estranged  
 Them, with enmity and hatred  
 Between the one and the other,  
 To the Day of Judgment  
 And soon will God<sup>715A</sup> show  
 Them what it is  
 They have done

أَخَذْنَا مِنْهُمُ  
 فَتَسُوا حَظًا مِمَّا ذُكِّرُوا بِهِ  
 فَأَعْرَبْنَا بَيْنَهُمُ الْعَدَاوَةَ وَالْبَغْضَاءَ  
 إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ  
 وَسَوْفَ يُنَبِّئُهُمُ اللَّهُ بِمَا كَانُوا يَصْنَعُونَ

16 O People of the Book !  
 There hath come to you  
 Our Apostle, revealing  
 To you much that ye  
 Used to hide in the Book,  
 And passing over much  
 (That is now unnecessary)

١٦- يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولُنَا  
 يُبَيِّنُ لَكُمْ كَثِيرًا مِمَّا كُنْتُمْ تُخْفُونَ مِنَ  
 الْكِتَابِ  
 وَيَعْفُو عَنْ كَثِيرٍ

17 There hath come to you  
 From God a (new) light  
 And a perspicuous Book —<sup>716</sup>

١٧- قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ نُورٌ  
 وَكِتَابٌ مُبِينٌ

18 Wherewith God guideth all  
 Who seek His good pleasure  
 To ways of peace and safety,  
 And leadeth them out  
 Of darkness, by His Will,  
 Unto the light,—guideth them  
 To a Path that is Straight

١٨- يَهْدِيهِ إِلَى طَرِيقِ اللَّهِ مِنَ التَّوْبَةِ رِضْوَانَهُ سُبُلَ  
 السَّلَامِ  
 وَيُخْرِجُهُم مِنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ بِإِذْنِهِ  
 وَيَهْدِيهِمْ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ

19 ~~In~~ blasphemy indeed  
 Are those that say  
 That God is Christ  
 The son of Mary  
 Say "Who then  
 Hath the least power

١٩- لَقَدْ كَفَرَ الَّذِينَ  
 قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ  
 قُلْ فَمَنْ يَمْلِكُ

715 The Christian Covenant may be taken to be the charge which Jesus gave to his disciples and which the disciples accepted to welcome Ahmad (Q lx1 6) Glimpses of this are to be found in the Gospel of St John even as it exists now (John xv 26 xvi 7) It is those who call themselves Christians who reject this True Christians have accepted it The enmity between those who call themselves Christians and the Jews will continue till the Last Day

715 A The change from the First Person in the beginning of the verse to the Third Person here illustrates the change from the personal relationship of the Covenant to the impersonal operation of Justice at Judgment Cf xxxv 9

716 *Mubīn* I wish I could translate by a simpler word than perspicuous But 'plain may mean unadorned the opposite of beautiful and this Book is among the most beautiful that it is the privilege of mankind to read Clear would be right as far as it means unambiguous, self-evident, not involved in mysteries of origin history or meaning one which every one can understand as to the essentials necessary for him without the intervention of priests or privileged persons *Mubīn* has all these meanings, but it suggests, besides some quality of a shining light, by which we are able to make things clear to distinguish the true from the false This I think is suggested better by "perspicuous" than by the word clear Besides it is hardly good idiom to speak of "a clear Book".

Against God, if His Will  
Were to destroy Christ  
The son of Mary, his mother,  
And all—every one  
That is on the earth ?  
For to God belongeth  
The dominion of the heavens  
And the earth, and all  
That is between He createth<sup>717</sup>  
What He pleaseth For God  
Hath power over all things "

مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا إِنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يُهْلِكَ الْيَسِيعَ  
ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ وَآمَنَهُ  
وَمَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا  
وَاللَّهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ  
وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ  
وَاللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ٥

20 (Both) the Jews and the  
Christians

Say . " We are sons  
Of God, and His beloved "<sup>718</sup>  
Say " Why then doth He  
Punish you for your sins ?  
Nay, ye are but men,—  
Of the men He hath created  
He forgiveth whom He pleaseth,  
And He punisheth whom He  
pleaseth<sup>719</sup>  
And to God belongeth<sup>719</sup>  
The dominion of the heavens  
And the earth, and all  
That is between  
And unto Him  
Is the final goal (of all) "

٢- وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُودُ وَالنَّصَارَى  
نَحْنُ أَبْنَاءُ اللَّهِ وَأَحِبَّاؤُهُ  
قُلْ فَلِمَ يُعَذِّبُكُمْ بِذُنُوبِكُمْ  
بَلْ أَنْتُمْ بَشَرٌ مِمَّنْ خَلَقَ  
يَغْفِرُ لِمَن يَشَاءُ  
وَيُعَذِّبُ مَن يَشَاءُ  
وَاللَّهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ  
وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا  
وَإِلَيْهِ الْمَصِيرُ ٥

21 O People of the Book !  
Now hath come unto you,  
Making (things) clear unto you,  
Our Apostle, after the break<sup>720</sup>

٢١- يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولُنَا  
يُبَيِّنُ لَكُمْ عَلَى فِتْرَةِ مَنِ الرُّسُلِ

717 The most honoured of the apostles of God are but men All power belongs to God and not to any man God's creation may take many forms but because in any particular form it is different from what we see daily around us it does not cease to be Creation, or to be subject to the power of God No creature can be God

718 *Sons of God* Cf Job, xxxviii 7 When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy In the 29th Psalm 1st verse the authorised Translation 'O ye mighty should apparently be O ye sons of Elim El being a name of God Cf also Genesis, vi 2 The sons of God saw the daughters of men

*Beloved* Cf Psalms, cxxvii 2 ' He giveth his beloved sleep

If used figuratively these and like words refer to the love of God Unfortunately son used in a physical sense, or beloved in an exclusive sense as if God loved only the Jews, make a mockery of religion

719 This refrain in the last verse negatives the idea of sonship, and in this verse negatives the idea of an exclusive ' Beloved In both cases it means that God is independent of physical relationships or exclusive partiality

720 The six hundred years (in round figures) between Christ and Muḥammad were truly the dark ages of the world Religion was corrupted, the standard of morals fell low, many false systems and heresies arose, and there was a break in the succession of apostles until the advent of Muḥammad

In (the series of) our apostles,  
Lest ye should say  
"There came unto us  
No bringer of glad tidings  
And no warner (from evil)"  
But now hath come  
Unto you a bringer  
Of glad tidings  
And a warner (from evil)  
And God hath power  
Over all things

## SECTION 4

- 22 Remember Moses said  
To his people "O my People!  
Call in remembrance the favour  
Of God unto you, when He  
Produced prophets among you,<sup>721</sup>  
Made you kings,<sup>722</sup> and gave  
You what He had not given  
To any other among the peoples<sup>723</sup>

- 23 "O my people! enter"<sup>724</sup>  
The holy land which  
God hath assigned unto you,  
And turn not back  
Ignominiously, for then  
Will ye be overthrown,  
To your own ruin "

أَنْ تَقُولُوا مَا جَاءَنَا مِنْ بَشِيرٍ  
وَلَا نَذِيرٍ  
فَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ بَشِيرٌ وَنَذِيرٌ  
وَاللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ٥

٢٢- وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَى لِقَوْمِهِ  
يَقُومُوا أَذْكُرُوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ  
إِذْ جَعَلَ فِيكُمْ أَنْبِيَاءَ وَجَعَلَكُمْ مُلُوكًا  
وَآتَاكُمْ مَا لَمْ يُؤْتِ أَحَدًا مِمَّنْ أَلَيْكُم ٥

٢٣- يَقُومُوا ادْخُلُوا الْأَرْضَ الْمَقْدَّسَةَ  
الَّتِي كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ  
وَلَا تَرْتَدُّوا عَلَى أَدْبَارِكُمْ  
فَتَنْقَلِبُوا خَاسِرِينَ ٥

721 There was a long line of patriarchs and prophets before Moses, eg, Abraham, Isaac, Ismā'il, Jacob etc

722 From the slavery of Egypt the Children of Israel were made free and independent and thus each man became as it were a king if only he had obeyed God and followed the lead of Moses

723 Cf Exod xix 5 Now therefore if ye will obey my voice indeed and keep my covenant then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people Israel was chosen to be the vehicle of God's message the highest honour which any nation can receive

724 We now come to the events detailed in the 13th and 14th chapters of the Book of Numbers in the Old Testament Read these as a Commentary and examine a good map of the Sinai Peninsula showing its connections with Egypt on the west North West Arabia on the east and Palestine on the north east We may suppose that Israel crossed from Egypt into the Peninsula somewhere near the northern extremity of the Gulf of Suez Moses organised and numbered the people and instituted the Priesthood They went south about 200 miles to Mount Sinai where the Law was received Then perhaps a hundred and fifty miles north, was the desert of Paran close to the southern borders of Canaan From the camp there twelve men were sent to spy out the land and they penetrated as far as Hebron, say about 150 miles north of their camp about 20 miles south of the future Jerusalem They saw a rich country and brought from it pomegranates and figs and a bunch of grapes so heavy that it had to be carried by two men on a staff They came back and reported that the land was rich but the men there were too strong for them The people of Israel had no courage and no faith and Moses remonstrated with them

24 They said "O Moses!  
In this land are a people  
Of exceeding strength <sup>725</sup>  
Never shall we enter it  
Until they leave it  
If (once) they leave,  
Then shall we enter "

25 (But) among (their) God-fearing men  
Were two on whom  
God had bestowed His grace <sup>726</sup>  
They said "Assault them  
At the (proper) Gate  
When once ye are in,  
Victory will be yours ,

26 But on God put your trust  
If ye have faith "

27 They said "O Moses!  
While they remain there,  
Never shall we be able  
To enter, to the end of time  
Go thou, and thy Lord,  
And fight ye two,  
While we sit here <sup>727</sup>  
(And watch) "

28 He said "O my Lord!  
I have power only

٢٣- قَالُوا يَا مُوسَى إِن فِيهَا قَوْمًا جَبَّارِينَ  
وَإِنَّا لَنُذْخِلُهَا  
حَتَّى يَخْرُجُوا مِنْهَا  
فَلَن يَخْرُجُوا مِنْهَا فَإِنَّا دَاخِلُونَ ٥

٢٥- قَالَ رَجُلَيْنِ مِنَ الَّذِينَ يَخَافُونَ  
أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ  
عَلَيْهِمَا ادْخُلُوا عَلَيْهِمُ الْبَابَ  
فَإِذَا دَخَلْتُمُوهُ فَكَفَّكُمْ غَلَبُونَ ٥

٢٦- وَعَلَى اللَّهِ تَوَكَّلُوا إِن كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ ٩

٢٧- قَالُوا يَا مُوسَى إِنَّا لَنُذْخِلُهَا أَبَدًا  
مَّا دَامُوا فِيهَا  
فَاذْهَبْ أَنْتَ وَرَبُّكَ فَقَاتِلَا  
إِنَّا هَاهُنَا قَاعِدُونَ ٥

٢٨- قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي لَا أَمْلِكُ

725 The people were not willing to follow the lead of Moses and were not willing to fight for their inheritance In effect they said Turn out the enemy first and then we shall enter into possession In God's Law we must work and strive for what we wish to enjoy

726 Among those who returned after spying out the land were two men who had faith and courage They were Joshua and Caleb Joshua afterwards succeeded Moses in the leadership after 40 years These two men pleaded for an immediate entry through the proper Gate which I understand to mean after taking all due precautions and making all due preparations Cf n 189 and n 203 But of course they said they must put their trust in God for victory

727 The advice of Joshua and Caleb and the proposals of Moses under divine instructions were unpalatable to the crowd whose prejudices were further inflamed by the other ten men who had gone with Joshua and Caleb They made an 'evil report' and were frightened by the great stature of the Canaanites The crowd was in open rebellion was prepared to stone Moses, Aaron, Joshua and Caleb and return to Egypt Their reply to Moses was full of irony insolence blasphemy and cowardice In effect they said 'You talk of your God and all that go with your God and fight there if you like we shall sit here and watch

Over myself and my brother <sup>728</sup>  
 So separate us from this  
 Rebellious people !''

9 God said " Therefore  
 Will the land be out  
 Of their reach for forty years <sup>729</sup>  
 In distraction will they  
 Wander through the land  
 But sorrow thou not  
 Over these rebellious people

إِلَّا نَفْسِي وَأَخِي  
 فَافْرِقْ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَ الْقَوْمِ الْفَاسِقِينَ  
 ٣٩- قَالَ فَإِنَّهَا مُعِزَّةٌ عَلَيْهِمْ أَرْبَعِينَ  
 سَنَةً يَتِيَلُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ  
 فَلَا تَأْسَ عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْفَاسِقِينَ

C 72 —The jealousy of Cain against Abel,  
 (v 30-46) Which led to the murder  
 Of innocent Abel, is the type  
 Of the jealousy between the People  
 Of the Book and their younger brethren  
 In Islam Jealousy leads to envy  
 And murder Such crimes against  
 Individuals are often crimes  
 Against whole peoples There are  
 Men who are ready to catch up  
 Every lie told against a just man  
 The just man should not grieve,  
 For that is their way

### SECTION 5

10. Recite to them the truth <sup>730</sup>  
 Of the story of the two sons <sup>731</sup>

٣٠- وَاقْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ نَبَأَ ابْنَيْ

728 'Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation (Num xiv 5) According to the words in the Old Testament story God said I will smite them with the pestilence and disinherit them (Num xiv 12) Moses prayed and interceded But as we are told here, (a spiritual touch not found in the Jewish story) Moses was careful to separate himself and his brother from the rebellion

729 The punishment of the rebellion of these stiff necked people rebellion that was repeated "these ten times (Num xiv 22) and more, was that they were left to wander distractedly hither and thither through the wilderness for forty years That generation was not to see the Holy Land All those that were twenty years old and upwards were to die in the wilderness your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness (Num xiv 29) Only those who were then children would reach the promised land And so it happened From the desert of Paran they wandered south north and east for forty years From the head of what is now the Gulf of Aqaba they travelled north keeping to the east side of the depression of which the Dead Sea and the river Jordan are portions Forty years afterwards they crossed the Jordan opposite what is now Jericho but by that time Moses Aaron and the whole of the elder generation had died

730 Literally ' recite to them in truth the story etc The point is that the story in Gen iv 1 15 is a bare narrative not including the lessons now to be enforced The apostle is told now to supply the truth of the matter, the details that will enforce the lessons

731 The two sons of Adam were Hābil (in the English Bible Abel) and Qābil (in English, Cain) Cain was the elder and Abel the younger—the righteous and innocent one Presuming on the right of the elder Cain was puffed up with arrogance and jealousy, which led him to commit the crime of murder Among the Christians, Cain was the type of the Jew as against Abel the Christian The Jew tried to kill Jesus and exterminate the Christian In the same way as against Muḥammad, the younger brother of the Semitic family, Cain was the type of the Old Testament and New Testament people, who tried to resist and kill Muḥammad and put down his people.

Of Adam. Behold! they each  
Presented a sacrifice (to God)  
It was accepted from one,  
But not from the other  
Said the latter "Be sure  
I will slay thee" "Surely,"  
Said the former, "God  
Doth accept of the sacrifice  
Of those who are righteous

31. "If thou dost stretch thy hand  
Against me, to slay me,  
It is not for me to stretch  
My hand against thee  
To slay thee for I do fear  
God, the Cherisher of the Worlds

32 "For me, I intend to let  
Thee draw on thyself  
My sin as well as thine,"<sup>732</sup>  
For thou wilt be among  
The Companions of the Fire,  
And that is the reward  
Of those who do wrong"<sup>733</sup>

33 The (selfish) soul of the other  
Led him to the murder  
Of his brother. he murdered  
Him, and became (himself)  
One of the lost ones"<sup>734</sup>

34 Then God sent a raven,  
Who scratched the ground,

أَدْمَ بِالْحَقِّ إِذْ قَرَّبَا قُرْبَانًا  
فَتُضِلَّ مِنْ أَحَدِهِمَا  
وَلَمْ يُتَقَبَّلْ مِنَ الْآخَرِ  
قَالَ لَأَقْتُلَنَّكَ

قَالَ إِنَّمَا يَتَقَبَّلُ اللَّهُ مِنَ الْمُتَّقِينَ ○

٣١- لَئِنْ بَسَطْتَ إِلَى يَدَايَ لَتَقْتُلَنِي  
مَا أَنَا بِبَاسٍ بِيَدَيْكَ إِلَيْكَ لَأَقْتُلَنَّكَ  
إِنِّي أَخَافُ اللَّهَ رَبَّ الْعَالَمِينَ ○

٣٢- إِنِّي أُرِيدُ أَنْ تَبْذُرَ بِرَأْسِي وَإِنَّكَ  
تَكُونُ مِنَ أَصْحَابِ النَّارِ  
وَذَلِكَ جَزَاءُ الظَّالِمِينَ ○

٣٣- فَطَوَّعَتْ لَهُ نَفْسُهُ قَتْلَ أَخِيهِ  
فَقَتَلَهُ  
وَأَصْبَحَ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ ○

٣٤- فَبَعَثَ اللَّهُ غُرَابًا يَبْحَثُ فِي الْأَرْضِ

732, *My sin as well as thine* There are two possible interpretations (1) The obvious one is that the unjust murderer not only carried on himself the burden of his own sin but also the burden of his victim's sins. The victim, in suffering a wrong or injustice is forgiven his own sins and the wrong doer, having been warned aggravates his own sin (2) 'My sin' has also been interpreted as 'the sin against me, in that thou slayest me' in that case "thy sin" may mean either 'thy crime in committing a murder or thy sin against thyself for the crime causes real loss to thyself in the Hereafter. See the last clause of the next verse

733. Abel's speech is full of meaning. He is innocent and God fearing. To the threat of death held out by the other he returns a calm reply aimed at reforming the other. 'Surely' he pleads "if your sacrifice was not accepted there was something wrong in you for God is just and accepts the sacrifice of the righteous. If this does not deter you I am not going to retaliate though there is as much power in me against you as you have against me. I fear my Maker for I know He cherishes all His Creation. Let me warn you that you are doing wrong. I do not intend even to resist but do you know what the consequences will be to you? You will be in spiritual torment

734 The innocent unselfish pleading of the younger brother had no effect for the soul of the other was full of pride, selfishness, and jealousy. He committed the murder, but in doing so, ruined his own self



To show him how to hide  
The shame of his brother<sup>735</sup>  
"Woe is me!" said he,  
"Was I not even able  
To be as this raven,  
And to hide the shame  
Of my brother?" Then he became  
Full of regrets—<sup>736</sup>

لِيُرِيَهُ كَيْفَ يُؤَارِي سَوْءَةَ أَخِيهِ  
قَالَ يُؤِيدُنِي أَعْجَزْتُ أَنْ أَكُونَ مِثْلَ  
هَذَا الْغُرَابِ فَأُؤَارِي سَوْءَةَ أَخِي<sup>٧٣٥</sup>  
فَأَصْبَحَ مِنَ النَّدَمِينَ<sup>٧٣٦</sup>

35 On that account We ordained  
For the Children of Israel  
That if any one slew  
A person—unless it be  
For murder or for spreading  
Mischief in the land—  
It would be as if  
He slew the whole people<sup>737</sup>  
And if any one saved a life,  
It would be as if he saved  
The life of the whole people  
Then although there came  
To them Our Apostles  
With Clear Signs, yet,  
Even after that, many  
Of them continued to commit  
Excesses in the land

٣٥- مِنْ أَجْلِ ذَلِكَ  
كُتِبْنَا عَلَى بَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ  
أَنَّهُ مَنْ قَتَلَ نَفْسًا  
بَغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ أَوْ فَسَادٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ  
فَكَأَنَّمَا قَتَلَ النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا  
وَمَنْ أَحْيَاهَا فَكَأَنَّمَا أَحْيَا النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا  
وَلَقَدْ جَاءَهُمْ رَسُولُنَا بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ  
ثُمَّ إِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِنْهُمْ  
بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فِي الْأَرْضِ لَمُسْرِفُونَ  
٣٦- إِنَّمَا جَزَاءُ الَّذِينَ يُحَارِبُونَ اللَّهَ  
وَرَسُولَهُ وَيَسْعَوْنَ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَسَادًا  
أَن يُقَتَّلُوا أَوْ يُصَلَّبُوا

36 The punishment of those  
Who wage war against God  
And His Apostle, and strive  
With might and main  
For mischief through the land<sup>738</sup>  
Is execution, or crucifixion,

735 *Sau at* may mean corpse with a suggestion of nakedness and shame in two senses (1) the sense of being exposed without burial and (2) the sense of being insulted by being violently deprived by the unwarranted murder of the soul which inhabited it—the soul too, of a brother

736 The thought at last came home to the murderer It was dreadful indeed to slay any one—the more so as he was a brother and an innocent righteous brother! But worse still the murderer had not even the decency to bury the corpse and of this simple duty he was reminded by a raven—a black bird usually held in contempt! His regret was on that account That was not true repentance

737 The story of Cain is referred to in a few graphic details in order to tell the story of Israel Israel rebelled against God slew and insulted righteous men who did them no harm but on the contrary came in all humility When God withdrew His favour from Israel because of its sins and bestowed it on a brother nation the jealousy of Israel plunged it deeper into sin To kill or seek to kill an individual because he represents an ideal is to kill all who uphold the ideal On the other hand to save an individual life in the same circumstances is to save a whole community What could be stronger condemnation of individual assassination and revenge?

738 For the double crime of treason against the State, combined with treason against God, as shown by overt crimes, four alternative punishments are mentioned, any one of which is to be applied according to circumstances *viz* execution (cutting off of the head), crucifixion, maiming or exile These were features of the Criminal Law then and for centuries afterwards except that tortures such as 'hanging drawing, and quartering' in English Law, and piercing of eyes and leaving the unfortunate victim exposed to a tropical sun, which was practised in Arabia, and all such tortures were abolished In any case sincere repentance before it was too late was recognised as a ground for mercy

Or the cutting off of hands  
And feet from opposite sides,<sup>739</sup>  
Or exile from the land  
That is their disgrace  
In this world, and  
A heavy punishment is theirs  
In the Hereafter ,

- 37 Except for those who repent  
Before they fall  
Into your power  
In that case, know  
That God is Oft forgiving,  
Most Merciful

#### SECTION 6

- 38 ﴿٣٨﴾ ye who believe !  
Do your duty to God,<sup>740</sup>  
Seek the means  
Of approach unto Him,  
And strive with might  
And main in His cause  
That ye may prosper<sup>741</sup>

- 39 As to those who reject  
Faith,—if they had  
Everything on earth,  
And twice repeated,  
To give as ransom  
For the penalty of the Day  
Of Judgment, it would  
Never be accepted of them  
Theirs would be  
A grievous Penalty

- 40 Their wish will be  
To get out of the Fire,  
But never will they  
Get out therefrom

أَوْ يَنْقُصَ كَيْدُكُمْ وَأَرْجُلُكُمْ مِنْ خِلَافٍ  
أَوْ يُنْفَوْا مِنَ الْأَرْضِ  
تِلْكَ لَهُمْ خِزْيٌ فِي الدُّنْيَا  
وَلَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ۝

٣٧- إِلَّا الَّذِينَ تَابُوا  
مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تَقْدُرُوا عَلَيْهِمْ  
فَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَفُوٌّ رَحِيمٌ ۝

٣٨- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ  
وَابْتَغُوا إِلَيْهِ الْوَسِيلَةَ  
وَجَاهِدُوا فِي سَبِيلِهِ  
لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ۝

٣٩- إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا  
لَوْ أَنَّ لَهُمْ مَا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا  
وَمِثْلَهُ مَعَهُ  
لِيَفْتَدُوا بِهِ مِنْ عَذَابِ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ  
مَا تُقْبَلُ مِنْهُمْ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ۝

٤٠- يُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يُخْرَجُوا مِنَ النَّارِ  
وَمَا هُمْ بِمُخْرَجِينَ مِنْهَا ۝

739 Understood to mean the right hand and the left foot

740 *Taqwā* here too might be translated 'fear of God' but the very next clause shows that 'fear of God' does not mean 'fear' in the ordinary sense which would make you avoid the object of fear. On the contrary the 'fear of God' is the intense desire to avoid everything that is against His Will and Law. It is in fact duty to God for we are told to seek ardently the means by which we may approach Him, and that can only be done by striving with might and main for His cause.

741 'Prosper' in the spiritual sense for that is all that matters as the life of this world is brief and fleeting and of small account as against Eternity.

Their Penalty will be  
One that endures

- 41 **As** to the thief,<sup>742</sup>  
Male or female,  
Cut off his or her hands  
A punishment by way  
Of example, from God,  
For their crime  
And God is Exalted in Power

- 42 But if the thief repent  
After his crime,  
And amend his conduct,  
God turneth to him  
In forgiveness, for God  
Is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful

- 43 Knowest thou not<sup>743</sup>  
That to God (alone)  
Belongeth the dominion  
Of the heavens and the earth?  
He punisheth whom He pleaseth,  
And He forgiveth whom He  
pleaseth  
And God hath power  
Over all things

- 44 **☉** Apostle! let not  
Those grieve thee, who race  
Each other into Unbelief<sup>744</sup>  
(Whether it be) among those  
Who say "We believe"  
With their lips but  
Whose hearts have no faith,

وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُّقِيمٌ ۝

٣١- وَالسَّارِقِ وَالسَّارِقَةُ  
فَأَقْطَعُوا أَيْدِيَهُمَا جَزَاءً  
بِمَا كَسَبَا نَكَالًا مِّنَ اللَّهِ  
وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ۝

٣٢- فَمَن تَابَ مِّنْ بَعْدِ ظُلْمِهِ وَأَصْلَحَ  
فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يَتُوبُ عَلَيْهِ  
إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ۝

٣٣- أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ  
أَنَّ اللَّهَ لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ  
يُعَذِّبُ مَن يَشَاءُ  
وَيَغْفِرُ لِمَن يَشَاءُ  
وَاللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ۝

٣٤- يَا أَيُّهَا الرَّسُولُ لَا يَحْزُنكَ الَّذِينَ  
يُسَارِعُونَ فِي الْكُفْرِ مِنَ الَّذِينَ  
قَالُوا آمَنَّا بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَلَمْ تُؤْمِنْ قُلُوبُهُمْ

742 Here we touch upon jurisprudence The Canon Law jurists are not unanimous as to the value of the property stolen which would involve the penalty of the cutting off of the hand The majority hold that petty thefts are exempt from this punishment The general opinion is that only one hand should be cut off for the first theft on the principle that if thy hand or thy foot offend thee cut them off and cast them from thee (Matt xviii 8) Apparently in the age of Jesus thieves were crucified (Matt xxvii 38)

743 Punishment really does not belong to mortals, but to God alone Only in order to keep civil society together and protect innocent people from crime, certain principles are laid down on which people can build up their criminal law But we must always remember that God not only punishes but forgives and forgiveness is the attribute which is more prominently placed before us It is not our wisdom that can really define the bounds of forgiveness or punishment, but His Will or Plan which is the true standard of righteousness and justice

744 Two classes of men are meant, viz, the Hypocrites and the Jews For both of them Mustafā laboured earnestly and assiduously, and it must have been a cause of great grief and disappointment to him that some among them showed so much insincerity, cunning, and hardness of heart These are types not yet extinct

Or it be among the Jews,—  
Men who will listen  
To any lie,—will listen  
Even to others who have  
Never so much as come<sup>745</sup>  
To thee. They change the words  
From their (right) times<sup>746</sup>  
And places they say,  
"If ye are given this,  
Take it, but if not,  
Beware!" If any one's trial  
Is intended by God, thou hast  
No authority in the least  
For him against God  
For such—it is not  
God's will to purify  
Their hearts For them  
There is disgrace  
In this world, and  
In the Hereafter  
A heavy punishment

- 5 (They are fond of) listening  
To falsehood, of devouring<sup>747</sup>  
Anything forbidden  
If they do come to thee,  
Either judge between them,  
Or decline to interfere<sup>748</sup>  
If thou decline, they cannot  
Hurt thee in the least  
If thou judge, judge  
In equity between them  
For God loveth those  
Who judge in equity

وَمِنَ الَّذِينَ هَادُوا سَمْعُونَ لِلْكَذِبِ  
سَمْعُونَ لِقَوْمٍ آخَرِينَ لَمْ يَأْتُوكَ  
يُخْرِفُونَ الْكَلِمَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَوَاضِعِهِ  
يَقُولُونَ إِنْ أُوتِيتُمْ هَذَا فَخُذُوهُ  
وَإِنْ لَمْ تَوْتَوْهُ فَاحْذَرُوا  
وَمَنْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ فِتْنَتَهُ  
فَلَنْ تَمْلِكَ لَهُ مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا  
أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ  
أَنْ يُطَهِّرْ قُلُوبَهُمْ لَهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا خِزْيٌ  
وَلَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ٥

٢٥- سَمْعُونَ لِلْكَذِبِ أَكَلُونَ لِلسُّخْتِ  
فَإِنْ جَاءُوكَ فَاحْكُم بَيْنَهُمْ أَوْ أَعْرِضْ  
عَنْهُمْ وَإِنْ تُعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ  
فَلَنْ يَصْرُوكَ شَيْئًا  
وَإِنْ حَكَمْتَ فَاحْكُم بَيْنَهُمْ بِالْقِسْطِ  
إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ ٥

745 There were men among the Jews who were eager to catch up any lie against the Apostle. They had their ears open even to tales from people who had never so much as come near to the Apostle. If we understand 'for' instead of 'to' before 'others' (for the Arabic word would bear both meanings) the sense will be: They are keen listeners or spies for any lies they can catch and they will act as spies for others (their Rabbis etc.) who are in the background but to whom they carry false tales.

746 Cf. v. 14. The addition of the words *min ba'di* here suggests the change of words from their right times as well as places. They did not deal honestly with their Law and misapplied it, by distorting the meaning. Or it may be that as tale-bearers they distorted the meaning by misrepresenting the context.

747 *Devouring anything forbidden* both in a literal and in a figurative sense. In the figurative sense it would be the taking of usury or bribes or taking undue advantage of people's weakness or their own fiduciary powers to add to their own wealth.

748 Where it is merely a trick to catch out the unwary a just man may honourably decline to interfere in a cause submitted to him, as also in a case where the parties are not honestly desirous of justice, but each hopes that some partiality will be shown to it.

46 But why do they come<sup>749</sup>  
 To thee for decision,  
 When they have (their own)  
 Law before them?—  
 Therein is the (plain)  
 Command of God, yet  
 Even after that, they would  
 Turn away For they  
 Are not (really)  
 People of Faith

٣٦- وَكَفَّ يُحْكُمُونَكَ  
 وَعِنْدَهُمُ التَّوْرَةُ  
 فِيهَا حُكْمُ اللَّهِ  
 ثُمَّ يَتَوَلَّوْنَ مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ  
 وَمَا أُولَئِكَ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۝

C 73 — True justice accords with God's Law  
 (v 47 89) Follow not men's selfish desires,  
 But God's Will, which was revealed  
 To Moses and Jesus, and now to Muhammad  
 Take not for friends and protectors  
 Those in whose hearts is a disease,—  
 To whom religion is a mockery  
 Or a plaything,—who worship evil  
 Proclaim the Truth of God, and be  
 Not afraid Eschew their iniquities,  
 Which were denounced by David  
 And Jesus But recognise with justice  
 Those who are sincere and humble,  
 Though they may be themselves  
 Not of your flock, if they witness to Truth

### SECTION 7

47 It was We who revealed  
 The Law (to Moses) therein  
 Was guidance and light<sup>750</sup>  
 By its standard have been judged  
 The Jews, by the Prophets  
 Who bowed (as in Islam)  
 To God's Will, by the Rabbis<sup>751</sup>  
 And the Doctors of Law

٣٧- إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَا التَّوْرَةَ فِيهَا هُدًى وَنُورٌ  
 يَحْكُمُ بِهَا النَّبِيُّونَ الَّذِينَ أَسْلَمُوا  
 لِلدِّينِ هَادُوا  
 وَالرَّبَّانِيُّونَ وَالْأَحْبَارُ

749 This is a searching question as to the motive of the Jews in bringing their cases for decision to the Apostle They came either (1) to ridicule whatever he said or (2) to deceive him as to facts and snatch a favourable decision which was against equity If their own Law did not suit their selfish interests, they sometimes twisted it But Muhammad was always inflexible in his justice

750 *Guidance*, with reference to conduct *light* with reference to insight into the higher realms of the spirit

751 *Rabbānī* may I think be rightly translated by the Jewish title of *Rabbi* for their learned men Jewish learning is identified with Rabbinical literature *Aḥbār* is the plural of *ḥabr* or *ḥabr* by which we may understand Jewish Doctors of Law Later the term was applied to those of other religions Query Is the word connected with the same root as 'Hebrew' or

Eber (Gen x 21) the ancestor of the Hebrew race? This seems negatived by the fact that the Arabic root connected with the word 'Hebrew' is *Abar*, not *ḥabar*

For to them was entrusted  
The protection of God's Book,  
And they were witnesses thereto <sup>752</sup>  
Therefore fear not men,  
But fear Me, and sell not  
My Signs for a miserable price <sup>753</sup>  
If any do fail to judge  
By (the light of) what God  
Hath revealed, they are  
(No better than) Unbelievers

بِمَا اسْتَفِظُوا مِنْ كِتَابِ اللَّهِ وَكَانُوا عَلَيْهِ  
شُهَدَاءَ فَلَا تَخْشَوُا النَّاسَ وَاحْشَوْنِ  
وَلَا تَشْتَرُوا بِآيَاتِي ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا  
وَمَنْ لَمْ يَحْكَمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ  
فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْكَافِرُونَ ○

48 We ordained therein for them <sup>754</sup>  
"Life for life, eye for eye,  
Nose for nose, ear for ear,  
Tooth for tooth, and wounds  
Equal for equal" But if  
Any one remits the retaliation  
By way of charity, it is  
An act of atonement for himself <sup>755</sup>  
And if any fail to judge  
By (the light of) what God  
Hath revealed, they are  
(No better than) wrong-doers <sup>756</sup>

٣٨- وَكَتَبْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ فِيهَا  
أَنْقِ النَّفْسَ بِالنَّفْسِ وَالْعَيْنَ بِالْعَيْنِ  
وَالْأَنْفَ بِالْأَنْفِ وَالْأُذُنَ بِالْأُذُنِ  
وَالسِّنَّ بِالسِّنِّ وَالْجُرُوحَ قِصَاصٌ  
فَمَنْ تَصَدَّقَ بِهِ فَهُوَ كَفَّارَةٌ لَهُ وَمَنْ لَمْ  
يَحْكَمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ ○

49 And in their footsteps  
We sent Jesus the son

٣٩- وَقَفَّيْنَا عَلَىٰ آثَارِهِم بِعِيسَى ابْنِ

752 They were living witnesses to the truth of Scripture and could testify that they had made it known to the people Cf ii 143 and iv 135

753 Two charges are made against the Jews (1) that even the books which they had they twisted in meaning, to suit their own purposes because they feared men rather than God (2) that what they had was but fragments of the original Law given to Moses mixed up with a lot of semi historical and legendary matter and some fine poetry The *Taurāt* mentioned in the Qur'ān is not the Old Testament as we have it nor is it even the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Old Testament containing the Law embedded in a great deal of semi historical and legendary narrative) See Appendix II on the *Taurāt* (printed at the end of this Sūra)

754 The retaliation is prescribed in three places in the Pentateuch viz Exod xxi 23 25 Leviticus xxiv 18 21 and Deut xix 21 The wording in the three quotations is different but in none of them is found the additional rider for mercy as here Note that in Matt v 38 Jesus quotes the Old Law eye for eye etc and modifies it in the direction of forgiveness but the Quranic injunction is more practical This appeal for mercy is as between man and man in the spiritual world Even where the injured one forgives the State or Ruler is competent to take such action as is necessary for the preservation of law and order in Society For crime has a bearing that goes beyond the interests of the person injured the Community is affected see Q v 35

755 This is not part of the Mosaic Law but the teaching of Jesus and of Muḥammad Notice how the teaching of Jesus is gradually introduced as leading up to the Qur'ān

756 The seeming repetitions at the end of verses 47 48 and 50 are not real repetitions The significant words in the three cases are Unbelievers wrong doers and rebellious and each fits the context If the Jews tamper with their books they are Unbelievers, if they give false judgments, they are wrong doers If the Christians follow not their light, they are rebellious

Of Mary, confirming  
The Law that had come  
Before him We sent him  
The Gospel therein  
Was guidance and light,<sup>757</sup>  
And confirmation of the Law  
That had come before him  
A guidance and an admonition  
To those who fear God.

50. Let the People of the Gospel  
Judge by what God hath revealed  
Therein If any do fail  
To judge by (the light of)  
What God hath revealed,  
They are (no better than)  
Those who rebel<sup>758</sup>

51. **E**o thee We sent the Scripture  
In truth, confirming  
The scripture that came  
Before it, and guarding it<sup>759</sup>  
In safety so judge  
Between them by what  
God hath revealed,  
And follow not their vain  
Desires, diverging  
From the Truth that hath come  
To thee To each among you  
Have We prescribed a Law  
And an Open Way<sup>760</sup>  
If God had so willed,  
He would have made you<sup>761</sup>  
A single People, but (His

مِنْ مَّصَدِّقَاتِ الْكِتَابِ يَدِيهِ مِنَ التَّوْرَةِ  
وَالْإِنْجِيلِ فِيهِ هُدًى وَنُورٌ  
وَمُصَدِّقَاتِ الْكِتَابِ يَدِيهِ مِنَ التَّوْرَةِ  
وَالْإِنْجِيلِ  
وَمَوْعِظَةً لِلْمُتَّقِينَ ۝

۝ وَلِيَحْكُمَ أَهْلُ الْإِنْجِيلِ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ  
اللَّهُ فِيهِ  
وَمِنْ لَمْ يَحْكَمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ  
فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ ۝

۝ وَأَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ  
بِالْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ  
الْكِتَابِ وَمُهَيْمِنًا عَلَيْهِ  
فَأَحْكُمْ بَيْنَهُمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ  
وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ  
عَمَّا جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْحَقِّ  
لِكُلِّ جَعَلْنَا مِنْكُمْ شِرْعَةً وَمِنْهَاجًا  
وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَجَعَلَكُمْ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً

757 Guidance and light see n 750 above For the meaning of the Gospel (Injil), see Appendix III On the *Injil*, (printed at the end of this Sūra)

758 See n 756 above

759 After the corruption of the older revelations the Qur'ān comes with a twofold purpose (1) to confirm the true and original Message and (2) to guard it or act as a check to its interpretation For example, if people seek retaliation in a spirit of revenge it holds forth mercy If they glibly mask their cowardice or sentimentalism by empty talk of turning the other cheek it tests them by the practical test of forgiveness and mercy

760 Law *shir'at*=rules of practical conduct Open Way *Minhāj*=the finer things which are above the law but which are yet available to every one like a sort of open highway The light in verses 47 and 49 above I understand to be something in the still higher regions of the spirit, which is common to mankind though laws and rules may take different forms among different Peoples

761 By origin mankind were a single people or nation iv 1 and ii 213 That being so God could have kept us all alike, with one language, one kind of disposition and one set of physical conditions (including climate) to live in But in His wisdom, He gives us diversity in these things not only at any given time, but in different periods and ages This tests our capacity for Unity (*Wahdāniyat*) still more, and accentuates the need of Unity and Islam.

Plan is) to test you in what  
He hath given you so strive  
As in a race in all virtues.  
The goal of you all is to God,  
It is He that will show you  
The truth of the matters  
In which ye dispute; <sup>762</sup>

52 And this (He commands)  
Judge thou between them  
By what God hath revealed,  
And follow not their vain  
Desires, but beware of them  
Lest they beguile thee  
From any of that (teaching)  
Which God hath sent down  
To thee And if they turn  
Away, be assured that  
For some of their crimes  
It is God's purpose to punish  
Them And truly most men  
Are rebellious

53 Do they then seek after  
A judgment of (the Days <sup>763</sup>  
Of) Ignorance? But who,  
For a people whose faith  
Is assured, can give  
Better judgment than God?

#### SECTION 8

54 **Q** ye who believe!  
Take not the Jews  
And the Christians  
For your friends and protectors <sup>764</sup>  
They are but friends and protectors  
To each other And he

وَلَكِنْ لِّيَبْلُوَكُمْ فِي مَا آتَاكُمْ  
فَاسْتَبِقُوا الْخَيْرَاتِ  
إِلَى اللَّهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ جَمِيعًا  
فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ ٥٢  
وَإِنْ أَحْكَمَ بَيْنَهُمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ  
وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا أَهْوَاءَ هُمْ  
وَالْحَدُّ لَهُمْ أَنْ يِعْتَذِرُوا عَنْ بَعْضِ مَا  
أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ إِلَيْكَ وَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا  
فَاعْلَمْ أَنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ أَنْ يُصِيبَهُمْ  
بِبَعْضِ ذُنُوبِهِمْ  
وَإِنْ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ النَّاسِ لَفَاسِقُونَ ٥٣

٥٣- اَفَحُكْمَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ يَبْعُونَ  
وَمَنْ اَحْسَنُ مِنَ اللَّهِ حُكْمًا لِّقَوْمٍ  
يُوقِنُونَ ٥٤

٥٤- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا  
لَا تَتَّخِذُوا الْيَهُودَ وَالنَّصَارَىٰ أَوْلِيَاءَ  
بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ وَمَنْ

762 As our true goal is God the things that seem different to us from different points of view will ultimately be reconciled in Him Einstein is right in plumbing the depths of Relativity in the world of physical science It points more and more to the need of Unity in God in the spiritual world

763 The Days of Ignorance were the days of tribalism feuds and selfish accentuation of differences in man Those days are really not yet over It is the mission of Islam to take us away from that false mental attitude towards the true attitude of Unity If our Faith is certain (and not merely a matter of words), God will guide us to that Unity

764 That is look not to them for help and comfort They are more likely to combine against you than to help you And this happened more than once in the lifetime of the Apostle and in after ages again and again He who associates with them and shares their counsels must be counted as of them. The trimmer loses whichever way the wheel of fortune turns



Amongst you that turns to them  
(For friendship) is of them  
Verily God guideth not  
A people unjust


يَتَوَلَّوْهُمْ مِنْكُمْ وَإِنَّ مِنْهُمْ  
إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ ٥٥

- 55 Those in whose hearts<sup>765</sup>  
Is a disease—thou seest  
How eagerly they run about  
Amongst them, saying  
" We do fear lest a change  
Of fortune bring us disaster "  
Ah ! perhaps God will give  
(Thee) victory, or a decision  
According to His Will  
Then will they repent  
Of the thoughts which they secretly  
Harboured in their hearts

٥٥- فَذَرَى الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ  
يُشَارِعُونَ فِيهِمْ  
يَقُولُونَ نَخْشَى أَنْ تُصِيبَنَا دَآئِرَةٌ  
فَعَسَى اللَّهُ أَنْ يَأْتِيَ بِالْفَتْحِ أَوْ أَمْرٍ مِّنْ  
عِنْدِهِ فَيُضْبِحُوا  
عَلَى مَا آسَرُوا فِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ نَادِمِينَ ٥٦

56. And those who believe  
Will say " Are these  
The men who swore  
Their strongest oaths by God,  
That they were with you ? " <sup>766</sup>  
All that they do  
Will be in vain,  
And they will fall  
into (nothing but) ruin

٥٦- وَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَهَؤُلَاءِ الَّذِينَ  
أَقْسَمُوا بِاللَّهِ جَهْدَ أَيْمَانِهِمْ  
إِنَّهُمْ لَعَمْرُكَ  
حَبِطَتْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ  
فَأَصْبَحُوا خَاسِرِينَ ٥٧

- 57  ye who believe !  
If any from among you  
Turn back from his Faith,  
Soon will God produce  
A people whom He will love  
As they will love Him, —  
Lowly with the Believers,  
Mighty against the Rejecters,  
Fighting in the Way of God,  
And never afraid  
Of the reproaches

٥٧- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا  
مَنْ يَزِدْكَ مِنْكُمْ عَنْ دِينِهِ  
فَسَوْفَ يَأْتِيَ اللَّهُ بِقَوْمٍ يُحِبُّهُمْ وَيُحِبُّونَهُ  
أَذَلَّةٍ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَعِزَّةٍ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ  
يُجَاهِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ  
وَلَا يَخَافُونَ لَوْمَةَ لَائِمٍ

765 Cf 11 10

766 The Hypocrites while matters were doubtful, pretended to be with Muslims but were in league with their enemies. When matters came to a decision and God granted victory to Islam, their position was awkward. They were not only disowned by the Muslims, but the Muslims could well say in reproach to their enemies "Are these the men who swore friendship for you? What was their friendship worth to you? Where are they now?"

Of such as find fault <sup>767</sup>  
That is the Grace of God,  
Which He will bestow  
On whom He pleaseth  
And God encompasseth all,  
And He knoweth all things

ذَلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ  
يُؤْتِيهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ  
وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ٥٧


53 Your (real) friends are  
(No less than ) God,  
His Apostle, and the (Fellowship  
Of) Believers,—those who  
Establish regular prayers  
And regular charity,  
And they bow  
Down humbly (in worship)

٥٨- إِنَّمَا وَلِيُّكُمُ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَالَّذِينَ  
آمَنُوا  
الَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ  
وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَهُمْ رَاكِعُونَ ٥٨

59 As to those who turn  
(For friendship) to God,  
His Apostle, and the (Fellowship  
Of) Believers,—it is  
The Fellowship of God  
That must certainly triumph

٥٩- وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ  
وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا  
فَإِنَّ حِزْبَ اللَّهِ هُمُ الْغَالِبُونَ ٥٩

#### SECTION 9

60  ye who believe !  
Take not for friends  
And protectors those  
Who take your religion  
For a mockery or sport,— <sup>768</sup>  
Whether among those  
Who received the Scripture  
Before you, or among those

٦٠- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا  
لَا تَتَّخِذُوا الَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا دِينَكُمْ هُزُوًا  
وَلَعِبًا  
مِّنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ

767 As most men are rebellious (v 52), it is inevitable that there should be apostates even from such a religion of reason and common sense as Islam. But here is a warning to the Muslim body that they should not repeat the history of the Jews and become so self satisfied or arrogant as to depart from the spirit of God's teaching. If they do the loss will be their own. God's bounty is not confined to one group or section of humanity. He can always raise up people who will follow the true spirit of Islam. That spirit is defined in two ways: first in general terms, they will love God and God will love them, and secondly by specific signs: amongst the Brethren their attitude will be that of humility but to wrong doers they will offer no mealy mouthed compromises, they will always strive and fight for truth and right: they will know no fear either physical or that more insidious form which says 'What will people say if we act thus?' They are too great in mind to be haunted by any such thought. For as the next verse says their friends are God, His Apostle, and His people, the people who judge rightly, without fear or favour.

768 It is not right that we should be in intimate association with those to whom religion is either a subject of mockery or at best is nothing but a plaything. They may be amused, or they may have other motives for encouraging you. But your association with them will sap the earnestness of your Faith, and make you cynical and insincere.

Who reject Faith,  
But fear ye God,  
If ye have Faith (indeed)

- 61 When ye proclaim  
Your call to prayer,  
They take it (but)  
As mockery and sport,  
That is because they are  
A people without understanding

- 62 Say " O People of the Book!  
Do ye disapprove of us  
For no other reason than  
That we believe in God,  
And the revelation  
That hath come to us  
And that which came  
Before (us), and (perhaps)  
That most of you  
Are rebellious and disobedient ? " 769

- 63 Say " Shall I point out  
To you something much worse  
Than this, (as judged)  
By the treatment it received  
From God? Those who  
Incurred the curse of God  
And His wrath, those of whom some  
He transformed into apes and  
swine, 770  
Those who worshipped Evil, —  
These are (many times) worse  
In rank, and far more astray  
From the even Path ! "

- 64 ~~When~~ When they come to thee,  
They say " We believe "

الْكُفَّارَ أُولِيَاءَ  
وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ ○

٦١- وَإِذَا نَادَيْتُمْ إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ  
الْتَجَدُّ وَهَاهُنَا مُرَاوِعًا  
ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ ○

٦٢- قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ  
هَلْ تَنْقُضُونَ مِيثَاقَ اللَّهِ أَنِ آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ  
وَمَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْنَا  
وَمَا أُنْزِلَ مِنْ قَبْلُ  
وَأَن كُنْتُمْ فَاسِقُونَ ○

٦٣- قُلْ هَلْ أُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِشَرٍّ مِنْ ذَلِكَ  
مَثُوبَةً عِنْدَ اللَّهِ  
مَنْ لَعَنَهُ اللَّهُ وَغَضِبَ عَلَيْهِ  
وَجَعَلَ مِنْهُمْ الْفُورَةَ وَالْخَنَازِيرَ وَعَبَدَ  
الطَّاغُوتَ  
أُولَئِكَ شَرٌّ مَكَانًا  
وَأَضَلُّ عَنِ السَّبِيلِ ○

٦٤- وَإِذَا حَاءُكُمْ قَالُوا آمَنَّا

769 There is the most biting irony in this and the next verse. You People of the Book! Do you hate us because we believe in God and not only our scripture, but yours also? Perhaps you hate us because we obey and you are in rebellion against God! Why hate us? There are worse things than our obedience and our Faith. Shall I tell you some of them? Our test will be what treatment God meted out to the things I mention. Who were the people who incurred the curse of God? (See Deut xi 28 and xxviii 15 68, and numerous passages like Hosea viii 14, and ix 1) Who provoked God's wrath? (See numerous passages like Deut i 34, Matt iii 7) Who forsook God and worshipped evil? (See Jeremiah, xvi 11 13) That is your record. Is that why you hate us?

770 For apes see Q ii 65. For men possessed by devils, and the devils being sent into swine, see Matt viii 28-32. Or perhaps both apes and swine are allegorical: those who falsified God's scriptures became lawless like apes, and those who succumbed to filth, gluttony, or gross living became like swine.

But in fact they enter  
With a mind against Faith,  
And they go out  
With the same  
But God knoweth fully  
All that they hide

وَقَدْ دَخَلُوا بِالْكَفْرِ  
وَهُمْ قَدْ خَرَجُوا بِهِ  
وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْتُمُونَ

65 Many of them dost thou  
See, racing each other  
In sin and rancour,  
And their eating of things<sup>771</sup>  
Forbidden Evil indeed  
Are the things that they do

٦٥- وَتَرَى كَثِيرًا مِنْهُمْ يُسَارِعُونَ فِي  
الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ وَأَكْلِهِمُ الشَّيْءَ  
الْبَاطِلَ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

66 Why do not the Rabbis  
And the doctors of law forbid  
Them from their (habit  
Of) uttering sinful words  
And eating things forbidden?  
Evil indeed are their works

٦٦- لَوْلَا يَنْهَاهُمُ الرَّبَّانِيُّونَ وَالْأَحْبَارُ  
عَنْ قَوْلِهِمُ الْإِثْمَ وَأَكْلِهِمُ الشَّيْءَ  
الْبَاطِلَ مَا كَانُوا يَصْنَعُونَ

67 The Jews say "God's hand"<sup>772</sup>  
Is tied up" Be *their* hands  
Tied up and be they accursed  
For the (blasphemy) they utter  
Nay, both His hands  
Are widely outstretched  
He giveth and spendeth  
(Of His bounty) as He pleaseth  
But the revelation that  
Cometh to thee from God  
Increaseth in most of them  
Their obstinate rebellion<sup>773</sup>  
And blasphemy Amongst them  
We have placed enmity<sup>774</sup>

٦٧- وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُودُ يَدُ اللَّهِ مَغْلُولَةٌ  
خُلِعَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَرُعُوا بِمَا قَالُوا  
بَلْ يَدَاهُ مَبْسُوطَتَانِ  
يُنْفِقُ كَيْفَ يَشَاءُ  
وَلَيَزِيدَنَّ كَثِيرًا مِنْهُمْ  
مِمَّا أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ طُغْيَانًا وَكُفْرًا  
وَأَلْقَيْنَا بَيْنَهُمُ الْعَدَاوَةَ

771 *Eating of things forbidden* may be construed in a literal or a figurative sense From its juxtaposition with sin and hatred it is better to construe it in a figurative sense as referring to their fraudulent misappropriations of other people's property or trust property Eating is used in v 69 below in the general sense of enjoyment and happiness

772 Cf v 13 and ii 245 for a "beautiful loan to God" and iii 181 for the blasphemous taunt, Then God is poor! It is another form of the taunt to say Then God's hands are tied up He is close-fisted He does not give! This blasphemy is repudiated On the contrary, boundless is God's bounty and He gives, as it were, with both hands outstretched—a figure of speech for unbounded liberality

773 Their jealousy—because *Mustafā* is chosen for God's Message—is so great that it only confirms and strengthens their rebellion and blasphemy

774 Cf v 15, where the eternal warring of the Christian sects among themselves and against the Jews, is referred to The reference is to the whole of the People of the Book, Jews and Christians,—their internal squabbles and their external disputes, quarrels, and wars

And hatred till the Day  
Of Judgment Every time  
They kindle the fire of war,  
God doth extinguish it,  
But they (ever) strive  
To do mischief on earth  
And God loveth not  
Those who do mischief <sup>775</sup>

68 If only the People of the Book  
Had believed and been righteous,  
We should indeed have  
Blotted out their iniquities  
And admitted them  
To Gardens of Bliss

69 If only they had stood fast  
By the Law, the Gospel,  
And all the revelation that was sent  
To them from their Lord,  
They would have enjoyed  
Happiness from every side <sup>776</sup>  
There is from among them  
A party on the right course  
But many of them  
Follow a course that is evil

#### SECTION 10

70 ﴿٧٠﴾ Apostle! proclaim  
The (Message) which hath been  
Sent to thee from thy Lord <sup>777</sup>  
If thou didst not, thou

لَا الْبَغْضَاءَ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ  
كَلِمًا أَوْ قُلًّا فَإِنَّا لِلْحَرْبِ أَطْفَالُهَا اللَّهُ  
وَيَسْعُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَسَادًا  
وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُفْسِدِينَ ٥

٦٨- وَلَوْ أَنَّ أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ آمَنُوا وَاتَّقَوْا  
لَكَفَرْنَا عَنْهُمْ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ  
وَلَا دَخَلْنَاهُمْ جَنَّاتِ النَّعِيمِ ٥

٦٩- وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ أَقَامُوا التَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ  
وَمَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْهِمْ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ  
لَأَكَلُوا مِنْ فَوْقِهِمْ  
وَمِنْ تَحْتِ أَرْجُلِهِمْ وَمِنْهُمْ أُمَّةٌ مُقْتَصِدَةٌ  
وَكَثِيرٌ مِنْهُمْ سَاءَ مَا يَحْكُمُونَ ٥

٧٠- يَا أَيُّهَا الرَّسُولُ بَلِّغْ مَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْكَ  
مِنْ رَبِّكَ ۖ وَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلْ

<sup>775</sup> The argument of the whole verse may be thus stated The Jews blaspheme and mock, and because of their jealousy the more they are taught the more obstinate they become in their rebellion But what good will it do to them? Their selfishness and spite sow quarrels among themselves which will not be healed till the Day of Judgment When they stir up wars, especially against the innocent God's Mercy is poured down like a flood of water to extinguish them But their wickedness continues to devise ever new mischief And God loves not mischief or those who do mischief

<sup>776</sup> The literal translation of the two lines would be They would have eaten from above them and from below their feet To eat (*akala*) is a very comprehensive word and denotes enjoyment generally physical social mental and moral and spiritual To eat what is forbidden in verses 65 and 66 referred to taking unlawful profit from usury or trust funds or in other ways Here "eating" would seem to mean receiving satisfaction or happiness in ordinary life as well as in the spiritual world From above them may refer to heavenly or spiritual satisfaction, and from below their feet to earthly satisfaction But it is better to take the words as a general idiom, and understand satisfaction or happiness from every side

<sup>777</sup> Muhammad had many difficulties to contend with many enemies and dangers to avoid This is to assure him that his Message was true and from God His mission must be fulfilled And he must—as he did—go forward and proclaim that Message and fulfil his mission, trusting to God for protection, and unconcerned if people who had lost all sense of right rejected it or threatened him

Wouldst not have fulfilled  
And proclaimed His Mission  
And God will defend thee  
From men (who mean mischief)  
For God guideth not  
Those who reject Faith

- 71 Say "O People of the Book!  
Ye have no ground  
To stand upon unless  
Ye stand fast by the Law,  
The Gospel, and all the revelation  
That has come to you from  
Your Lord" It is the revelation  
That cometh to thee from  
Thy Lord, that increaseth in most  
Of them their obstinate  
Rebellion and blasphemy  
But sorrow thou not  
Over (these) people without Faith <sup>778</sup>

- 72 Those who believe (in the Qur'an),  
Those who follow the Jewish  
(scriptures),  
And the Sabians and the  
Christians,—  
Any who believe in God  
And the Last Day,  
And work righteousness,—<sup>779</sup>  
On them shall be no fear,  
Nor shall they grieve

73. We took the Covenant  
Of the Children of Israel  
And sent them apostles  
Every time there came  
To them an apostle  
With what they themselves  
Desired not—some  
(Of these) they called

فَمَا بَلَغْتَ رِسَالَتَهُ  
وَاللَّهُ يَعْصِمُكَ مِنَ النَّاسِ  
إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْكَافِرِينَ ○

٤١- قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لَسْتُمْ عَلَى شَيْءٍ  
حَتَّى تُقِيمُوا الشُّرُوعَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ  
وَمَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْكُمْ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ  
وَلَيَزِيدَنَّ كَثِيرًا مِنْهُمْ مَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْكَ  
مِنْ رَبِّكَ  
طُغْيَانًا وَكُفْرًا  
فَلَا تَأْسَ عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ ○

٤٢- إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا  
وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالصَّيُّونَ وَالنَّصَارَى  
مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ  
وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا  
فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ○

٤٣- لَقَدْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَ بَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ  
وَأَرْسَلْنَا إِلَيْهِمُ رُسُلًا  
كُلَّمَا جَاءَهُمْ رَسُولٌ  
بِمَا لَا تَهْوَى أَنْفُسُهُمْ فَرِيقًا

<sup>778</sup> In v 29 Moses was told not to sorrow over a rebellious people. Here Muhammad is told not to sorrow over people without Faith. The second situation is even more trying than the first. Rebellion may be a passing phase. Want of faith is an attitude of mind that is well nigh hopeless. Yet the Apostle patiently reasoned with them and bore their taunts and insults. If the argument runs: you do not believe in anything even in the things that you may be expected to believe in, how can you receive in Faith God's Message that has come in another form? In fact your jealousy adds to your obstinacy and unbelief.

<sup>779</sup> Cf. ii 62. As God's Message is one, Islam recognises true faith in other forms provided that it be sincere, supported by reason, and backed up by righteous conduct. Note 76 explains who the Sabians were.

Impostors, and some they  
(Go so far as to) slay <sup>780</sup>

- 74 They thought there would be  
No trial (or punishment),  
So they became blind and deaf, <sup>781</sup>  
Yet God (in mercy) turned  
To them, yet again many  
Of them became blind and deaf  
But God sees well  
All that they do

- 75 They do blaspheme who say  
"God is Christ the son  
Of Mary" But said Christ <sup>782</sup>  
"O Children of Israel!  
Worship God, my Lord  
And your Lord" Whoever  
Joins other gods with God,—  
God will forbid him  
The Garden, and the Fire  
Will be his abode There will  
For the wrong-doers  
Be no one to help

- 76 They do blaspheme who say  
God is one of three  
In a Trinity for there is  
No god except One God  
If they desist not  
From their word (of blasphemy),  
Verily a grievous penalty  
Will befall the blasphemers  
Among them

- 77 Why turn they not to God,  
And seek His forgiveness?  
For God is Oft-forgiving,  
Most Merciful

- 78 Christ the son of Mary  
Was no more than  
An Apostle, many were  
The apostles that passed away

كَذَّبُوا وَفِرُّوْا يَفْقَهُوْنَ ۝

٤٧- وَحَسِبُوْا اَلَا تَكُوْنُ فِتْنَةٌ فَعَمَّوْا  
صَلُّوْا ثُمَّ تَابَ اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِمْ  
ثُمَّ عَمَّوْا وَصَلُّوْا كَثِيْرًا مِنْهُمْ  
وَاللّٰهُ بَصِيْرٌ بِمَا يَعْمَلُوْنَ ۝

٤٥- لَقَدْ كَفَرَ الَّذِيْنَ قَالُوْا اِنَّ اللّٰهَ هُوَ  
الْمَسِيْحُ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ  
وَقَالَ الْمَسِيْحُ يَبْنٰى اِسْرَءِيْلَ اَعْبُدُوْا  
اللّٰهَ رَبِّيْ وَرَبَّكُمْ اِنَّهٗ مَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللّٰهِ  
فَقَدْ حَزَمَ اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ الْجَنَّةَ  
وَمَا وِلْدَةُ النَّارِ وَمَا لِلظّٰلِمِيْنَ مِنْ اَنْصَارٍ ۝

٤٦- لَقَدْ كَفَرَ الَّذِيْنَ قَالُوْا اِنَّ اللّٰهَ ثَلَاثٌ  
تَّلَاثَةٌ وَمَا مِنْ اِلٰهٍ اِلَّا اِلٰهٌ وَّاحِدٌ  
وَ اِنْ لَّمْ يَنْتَهُوْا  
عَمَّا يَقُوْلُوْنَ لَيَمَسَّنَّ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا  
مِنْهُمْ عَذَابُ اَلِيْمٍ ۝  
٤٨- اَفَلَا يَتُوْبُوْنَ اِلَى اللّٰهِ وَيَسْتَغْفِرُوْنَ  
وَاللّٰهُ غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ۝

٤٨- مَا الْمَسِيْحُ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ اِلَّا رَسُوْلٌ  
قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهٖ الرُّسُلُ ۝

780 Cf 11 87 and n 91

781 That is they turned away their eyes from God's Signs and they turned a deaf ear to God's Message

782 Cf Matt iv 10, where Christ rebukes Satan for desiring the worship of other than God, John xx 17 where Christ says to Mary Magdalene, "Go unto my brethren and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God" Cf also Luke xviii 19, where Christ rebukes a certain ruler for calling him Good Master Why callest thou me good? None is good, save One, that is, God' In Mark xii 25 Jesus says "The first of all the commandments is Hear O Israel the Lord our God is One Lord"

Before him His mother  
Was a woman of truth <sup>783</sup>  
They had both to eat  
Their (daily) food  
See how God doth make  
His Signs clear to them , <sup>784</sup>  
Yet see in what ways  
They are deluded  
Away from the truth '

- 79 Say " Will ye worship,  
Besides God, something  
Which hath no power either  
To harm or benefit you ?  
But God,—He it is  
That heareth and knoweth  
All things "

- 80 Say " O People of the Book !  
Exceed not in your religion <sup>785</sup>  
The bounds (of what is proper),  
Trespassing beyond the truth,  
Nor follow the vain desires  
Of people who went wrong  
In times gone by,—who misled  
Many, and strayed (themselves)  
From the even Way

#### SECTION 11

- 81 Curses were pronounced  
On those among the Children  
Of Israel who rejected Faith,  
By the tongue of David <sup>786</sup>  
And of Jesus the son of Mary <sup>787</sup>  
Because they disobeyed  
And persisted in Excesses

وَأَمَّا صِدْقَةٌ  
كَانَا يَأْكُلِينَ الطَّعَامَ  
أَنْظُرْ كَيْفَ بُيِّنَ لَهُمُ الْآيَاتِ  
ثُمَّ أَنْظُرْ إِلَىٰ يُؤْفَكُونَ ○

٧٩- قُلْ أَتَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ  
مَا لَا يَنفَعُكُمْ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَضُرُّ  
وَاللَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ○

٨٠- قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ  
لَا تَغْلُوا فِي دِينِكُمْ غَيْرَ الْحَقِّ  
وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا أَهْوَاءَ قَوْمٍ قَدْ ضَلُّوا مِن قَبْلُ  
وَآضَلُّوا كَثِيرًا  
وَضَلُّوا عَن سَوَاءِ السَّبِيلِ ○

٨١- لَعْنَتِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِن بَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ  
عَلَىٰ لِسَانِ دَاوُدَ وَعِيسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ  
ذَٰلِكَ بِمَا عَصَوْا وَكَانُوا يَعْتَدُونَ ○

783 She never claimed that she was a mother of God, or that her son was God She was a pious virtuous woman

784 Note how logically the argument has led up from Jewish back slidings and want of faith to blasphemies associated with the names of Jesus and Mary and in the following verses to the worship of senseless stocks and stones God is One, His Message is one yet how people's perversity transforms truth into falsehood religion into superstition!

785 Excess as opposed to moderation and reason is the simplest test by which a hypocrite or a selfish man who trades on religion is known from a sincere pious and truly religious man Excess means that truth is sometimes concealed or trampled upon that the fashions of ancestors or contemporaries are copied or overdone and God's name is dishonoured by blasphemies or the setting up of false gods or fetishes or that good (or even bad) men are deified and worshipped The true path is the even path the path of rectitude (Cf ii 108 and v 13)

786 The Psalms of David have several passages of imprecations against the wicked Cf Psalms cix 17 18, lxxviii 21 22 (' Therefore the Lord heard this and was wroth so a fire was kindled against Jacob and anger also came up against Israel, because they believed not in God and trusted not in His salvation'), Psalms lxi 22-28 and Psalms v 10

787 Cf Matt xxiii 33 ( Ye serpents ye generation of vipers how can ye escape the damnation of Hell? ), also Matt xii 34



- 82 Nor did they (usually)  
 Forbid one another <sup>788</sup>  
 The iniquities which they  
 Committed evil indeed  
 Were the deeds which they did

- 83 Thou seest many of them  
 Turning in friendship  
 To the Unbelievers  
 Evil indeed are (the works) which  
 Their souls have sent forward  
 Before them (with the result),  
 That God's wrath  
 Is on them,  
 And in torment  
 Will they abide

- 84 If only they had believed  
 In God, in the Apostle,  
 And in what hath been  
 Revealed to him, never  
 Would they have taken  
 Them for friends and protectors,  
 But most of them are  
 Rebellious wrong-doers

- 85 Strongest among men in enmity  
 To the Believers wilt thou  
 Find the Jews and Pagans,  
 And nearest among them in love  
 To the Believers wilt thou  
 Find those who say, <sup>789</sup>  
 "We are Christians"  
 Because amongst these are  
 Men devoted to learning <sup>790</sup>  
 And men who have renounced  
 6 The world, and they  
 30 Are not arrogant

٨٢- كَانُوا لَا يَتَنَاهَوْنَ عَنْ مُنْكَرٍ فَعَلُوهُ  
 لَبِئْسَ مَا كَانُوا يَفْعَلُونَ ○

٨٣- تَرَى كَثِيرًا مِنْهُمْ  
 يَتَوَلَّوْنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا  
 لَبِئْسَ مَا قَدَّمَتْ لَهُمْ أَنْفُسُهُمْ  
 أَنْ سَخِطَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ  
 وَفِي الْعَذَابِ هُمْ خَالِدُونَ ○

٨٤- وَلَوْ كَانُوا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالنَّبِيِّ  
 وَمَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْهِ  
 مَا اتَّخَذُوا لَهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءَ  
 وَلَكِنْ كَثِيرًا مِنْهُمْ فَاسِقُونَ ○

٨٥- لَتَجِدَنَّ أَشَدَّ النَّاسِ عَدَاوَةً لِلَّذِينَ  
 آمَنُوا الْيَهُودَ وَالَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا  
 وَلَتَجِدَنَّ أَقْرَبَهُمْ مَوَدَّةً لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا  
 الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّا نَصْرِي ذَلِكَ يَأْتِيهِمْ  
 قَسِيسِينَ وَرُهَبَانًا  
 وَأَنْهُمْ لَا يَسْكُرُونَ ○

788 There are bad men in every community but if leaders connive at the misdeeds of the commonalty —and even worse if leaders themselves share in the misdeeds as happened with the Pharisees and Scribes against whom Jesus spoke out then that community is doomed

789 The meaning is not that they merely call themselves Christians but that they are such sincere Christians that they appreciate Muslim virtues as did the Abyssinians to whom Muslim refugees went during the persecution in Mecca They would say It is true we are Christians, but we understand your point of view and we know you are good men They are Muslims at heart, whatever their label may be

790 *Qissis* I have translated as 'devoted to learning' following the Commentators It seems to be a foreign word possibly Abyssinian rather than Syriac as the reference seems to be to the Abyssinian Christians Their real devotion to learning and the renunciation of the world by the Monastic Orders are contrasted with the hypocrisy and arrogance of the Pharisees and Scribes

86 And when they listen  
To the revelation received  
By the Apostle, thou wilt  
See their eyes overflowing  
With tears, for they  
Recognize the truth  
They pray " Our Lord !  
We believe , write us  
Down among the witnesses

٨٦- وَإِذَا سَمِعُوا مَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَى الرَّسُولِ  
تَرَىٰ أَعْيُنُهُمْ تَفِيضُ مِنَ الدَّمْعِ  
مِمَّا عَرَفُوا مِنَ الْحَقِّ  
يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا آمَنَّا  
فَاكْتُبْنَا مَعَ الشَّاهِدِينَ ○

87 " What cause can we have  
Not to believe in God  
And the truth which has  
Come to us, seeing that  
We long for our Lord  
To admit us to the company  
Of the righteous ? "

٨٧- وَمَا لَنَا لَا نُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ  
وَمَا جَاءَنَا مِنَ الْحَقِّ  
وَنَطْمَعُ أَنْ يُدْخِلَنَا رَبُّنَا  
مَعَ الْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ ○

88 And for this their prayer  
Hath God rewarded them  
With Gardens, with rivers  
Flowing underneath,— their eternal  
Home Such is the recompense  
Of those who do good

٨٨- فَأَنَّا بَهَمُ اللَّهِ بِمَا قَالُوا  
جَعَلَتْ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ  
خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا وَذَلِكَ جَزَاءُ الْحَسَنِينَ ○

89 But those who reject Faith  
And belie Our Signs,—  
They shall be Companions  
Of Hell-fire

٨٩- وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَكَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا  
أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْجَحِيمِ ○

C 74 —In the physical pleasures of life  
(v 90—111) The crime is excess there is no merit  
In abstention from things that are good  
And lawful Take no rash vows,  
But to solemn oaths be faithful Shun  
As abominations drinking and gambling  
And superstitions of all kinds  
But be reverent to what is sacred  
In rites and associations Not the same  
Are things good and things evil  
Learn to distinguish, but pry not  
Into questions beyond your ken  
Guard your own souls in truth  
And justice, and no harm can befall you

## SECTION 12.

90 ②h ye who believe !  
Make not unlawful

٩٠- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَحْزُمُوا

The good things which God  
Hath made lawful for you,  
But commit no excess <sup>791</sup>  
For God loveth not  
Those given to excess

- 91 Eat of the things which  
God hath provided for you,  
Lawful and good, but fear  
God, in Whom ye believe

- 92 God will not call you  
To account for what is  
Futile in your oaths, <sup>792</sup>  
But He will call you  
To account for your deliberate  
Oaths for expiation, feed  
Ten indigent persons,  
On a scale of the average  
For the food of your families,  
Or clothe them, or give  
A slave his freedom  
If that is beyond your means,  
Fast for three days  
That is the expiation  
For the oaths ye have sworn  
But keep to your oaths  
Thus doth God make clear  
His Signs, that ye  
May be grateful

- 93 Oh ye who believe!  
Intoxicants and gambling, <sup>793</sup>

طَيِّبَتْ مَا أَحَلَّ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ  
وَلَا تَعْتَدُوا

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ ○

٩١- وَكُلُوا مِن مَّا رَزَقَكُمُ اللَّهُ حَلَالًا طَيِّبًا  
وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي أَنْتُمْ بِهِ مُؤْمِنُونَ ○

٩٢- لَا يُؤْخَذُ كُمْ بِاللَّغْوِ فِي أَيْمَانِكُمْ  
وَلَكِنْ يُؤْخَذُ كُمْ بِمَا عَقَدْتُمْ مِنَ الْإِيمَانِ  
كَكَفَّارَتِهِ إِطْعَامُ عَشْرَةِ مَسْكِينٍ  
مِّنْ أَوْسَطِ مَا تُطْعَمُونَ أَهْلِيكُمْ  
أَوْ كِسْوَتُهُمْ أَوْ تَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ  
فَمَن لَّمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامُ ثَلَاثَةِ أَيَّامٍ ذَلِكَ  
كَفَّارَتُهُ أَيْمَانُكُمْ إِذَا حَلَفْتُمْ  
وَاحْفَظُوا أَيْمَانَكُمْ  
كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ  
لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ○

٩٣- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّمَا الْخَمْرُ وَالْمَيْسِرُ

791 In pleasures that are good and lawful the crime is excess. There is no merit merely in abstinence or asceticism though the humility or unselfishness that may go with asceticism may have its value. In v. 85 Christian monks are praised for particular virtues though here and elsewhere monasticism is disapproved of. Use God's gifts of all kinds with gratitude but excess is not approved of by God.

792 Vows of penance or abstinence may sometimes be futile or even stand in the way of a really good or virtuous act. See ii. 224—226 and notes. The general principles established are (1) take no futile oaths, (2) use not God's name literally or in intention to fetter yourself against doing a lawful or good act, (3) keep to your solemn oaths to the utmost of your ability, (4) where you are unable to do so, expiate your failure by feeding or clothing the poor or obtaining some one's freedom or if you have not the means, by fasting. This is from a spiritual aspect. If any party suffers damage from your failure, compensation will be due to him, but that would be a question of law or equity.

(Dedication of) stones,<sup>794</sup>  
 And (divination by) arrows,<sup>795</sup>  
 Are an abomination,—  
 Of Satan's handiwork  
 Eschew such (abomination),  
 That ye may prosper

وَالْأَنْصَابُ وَالْأَزْلَامُ  
 رَجَسٌ مِّنْ عَمَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ  
 فَاجْتَنِبُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ○

- 94 Satan's plan is (but)  
 To excite enmity and hatred  
 Between you, with intoxicants  
 And gambling, and hinder you  
 From the remembrance  
 Of God, and from prayer  
 Will ye not then abstain ?

٩٤- إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ  
 عَنْكُمُ الرِّجْسَ أَجْمَعًا وَيُطَهِّرَ  
 الْفِتْرَةَ وَتُذَكِّرُوا اللَّهَ مَا  
 كُنْتُمْ تُنْكِرُونَ ○

- 95 Obey God, and obey the Apostle,<sup>796</sup>  
 And beware (of evil)  
 If ye do turn back,  
 Know ye that it is  
 Our Apostle's duty  
 To proclaim (the Message)<sup>797</sup>  
 In the clearest manner

٩٥- وَأَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا  
 الرَّسُولَ ○ وَأَحْذَرُوا  
 فَإِنْ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ فَأَعْلَمُوا  
 إِنَّمَا عَلَى رَسُولِنَا  
 الْبَلَاءُ الْمُبِينُ ○

- 96 On those who believe  
 And do deeds of righteousness  
 There is no blame  
 For what they eat,  
 When they guard themselves  
 From evil, and believe,  
 And do deeds of righteousness,—  
 (Or) again, guard themselves  
 From evil and believe,—  
 (Or) again, guard themselves  
 From evil and do good

٩٦- لَيْسَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا  
 الصَّالِحَاتِ  
 جُنَاحٌ فِيمَا طَعِمُوا إِذَا مَا اتَّقَوْا  
 وَآمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ  
 ثُمَّ اتَّقَوْا وَآمَنُوا  
 ثُمَّ اتَّقَوْا وَأَحْسَنُوا

794 Cf v 4 The stones there referred to were stone altars or stone columns on which oil was poured for consecration or slabs on which meat was sacrificed to idols. Any idolatrous or superstitious practices are here condemned. The *ansab* were objects of worship and were common in Arabia before Islam. See Renan 'History of Israel' Chapter iv and *Corpus Inscriptionum Semiticarum* Part I p 154. Illustrations Nos 123 and 123 bis are Phœnician columns of that kind found in Malta.

795 Cf v 4 The arrows there referred to were used for the division of meat by a sort of lottery or raffle. But arrows were also used for divination i.e. for ascertaining lucky or unlucky moments or learning the wishes of the heathen gods, as to whether men should undertake certain actions or not. All superstitions are condemned.

796 We are asked to obey the commands of God (which are always reasonable) instead of following superstitions (which are irrational) or seeking undue stimulation in intoxicants or undue advantage in gambling. To some there may be temporary excitement or pleasure in these but that is not the way either of prosperity or piety.

797 Cf v 70 Both the worldly and the spiritual aspects of loss are pointed out. Can God's Message do more?

For God loveth those  
Who do good <sup>798</sup>

## SECTION 13.

97. Oh ye who believe !  
God will make a trial of you  
In a little matter  
Of game well within reach  
Of your hands and your lances,  
That He may test <sup>799</sup>  
Who feareth Him unseen  
Any who transgress  
Thereafter, will have  
A grievous penalty
98. Oh ye who believe !  
Kill not game  
While in the Sacred  
Precincts or in pilgrim garb <sup>800</sup>  
If any of you doth so  
Intentionally, his expiation  
Is an offering, made  
To the Ka'ba, of an animal  
Equivalent to the one he killed, <sup>801</sup>

وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ٥

۹۷-يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَيَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ اللَّهُ  
بَشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الصَّيْدِ تَنَالَهُ أَبْدِيكُمْ وَ  
رِمَا حَكْمُ لِيَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ مَن يَخَافُهُ بِالْغَيْبِ  
فَمَنِ اعْتَدَىٰ نَعْدَ ذَلِكَ  
فَلَهُ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ٥

۹۸-يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَقْتُلُوا الصَّيْدَ  
وَأَنْتُمْ حُرُمٌ  
وَمَن قَتَلَهُ مِنْكُمْ مُّتَعَتِدًا  
فَجَزَاءٌ مِّثْلُ مَا قَتَلَ مِنَ النَّعَمِ

798 There is a subtle symphony in what appears at first sight to be a triple repetition. The relation of such simple regulations as those of food or game or the reverence due to a sacred place or sacred institution has to be explained as a series of higher duties. Baidhawī is right in classifying such duties under three heads: those due to God, those due from a man to himself (his self-respect) and those due to other creatures of God. Or perhaps all duties have this threefold aspect. The first may be called Believing or Faith, the second Guarding ourselves from evil or Conscience, and the third doing good or Righteousness. But the simplest physical rules e.g. those about eating, cleanliness etc. if they are good refer also to the higher aspects. If we eat bad food we hurt ourselves, we cause offence to our neighbours, and we disobey God. If we have faith and righteousness are we likely to be wanting in conscience? If we have conscience and faith are we likely to fail in righteousness? If we have conscience and righteousness what can be their foundation but faith? All three manifest themselves in a willing obedience to God and love for Him. We realise His love in loving and doing good to His creatures, and our love for Him is meaningless without such good.

799 Literally know. Cf. iii 166 and iii 154 n 467. Game is forbidden in the Sacred Precincts. If we deliberately break that injunction we have no faith and reverence.

800 See v 2 and n 684. The pilgrim garb *Ihrām* has been explained in n 212 ii 196.

801 For an inadvertent breach of the game rule there is apparently no penalty. Intentional breach will be punished if possible by preventive action. If in some case the preventive action is not effective the penalty is prescribed. The penalty is in three alternatives: an equivalent animal should be presented to the Ka'ba for sacrifice; if so the meat would be distributed to the poor, or the poor must be fed with grain or money according to the value of the animal if one had been sacrificed; or the offender must fast as many days as the number of the poor who would have been fed under the second alternative. Probably the last alternative would only be open if the offender is too poor to afford the first or second, but on this point Commentators are not agreed. The "equivalent animal" in the first alternative would be one of similar value or weight in meat or of similar shape (e.g. goat to antelope) as adjudged by two just men on the spot.

The alternatives about the penalty and its remission ("God will forgive what is past") or exaction explain the last two lines of the verse: being Exalted and Lord of Retribution. God can remit or regulate according to His just laws.

As adjudged by two just men  
Among you, or the feeding  
Of the indigent, or its  
Equivalent in fasts that he  
May taste of the penalty  
Of his deed God will  
Forgive what is past  
For repetition God will  
Exact from him the penalty  
For God is Exalted,  
And Lord of Retribution

- 99 Lawful to you is the pursuit <sup>802</sup>  
Of water-game and its use  
For food,— for the benefit  
Of yourselves and those who  
Travel, but forbidden  
Is the pursuit of land-game,—  
As long as ye are  
In the Sacred Precincts  
Or in pilgrim garb  
And fear God, to Whom  
Ye shall be gathered back

- 100 God made the Ka'ba,  
The Sacred House, an asylum  
Of security for men, as  
Also the Sacred Months, <sup>803</sup>  
The animals for offerings,  
And the garlands that mark <sup>804</sup> them  
That ye may know  
That God hath knowledge  
Of what is in the heavens  
And on earth and that God  
Is well-acquainted  
With all things <sup>805</sup>

- 101 Know ye that God  
Is strict in punishment

يُحْكَمْ بِهِ ذَوَا عَدْلٍ مِنْكُمْ هَذَا بِبَلْعِ  
الْكُفَّةِ أَوْ كِفَارَةٍ طَعَامُ مَسْكِينٍ  
أَوْ عَدْلٌ ذَلِكَ صِيَامًا لِيَذُوقَ وَبَالَ  
أَمْرِهِ عَفَا اللَّهُ عَمَّا سَلَفَ  
وَمَنْ عَادَ فَيَنْتَقِمُ اللَّهُ مِنْهُ  
وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ ذُو انتِقَامٍ ○

٩٩- أُحِلَّ لَكُمْ صَيْدُ الْبَحْرِ وَطَعَامُهُ  
مَتَاعًا لَكُمْ وَلِلسَّيَافَةِ  
وَحُرِّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ صَيْدُ الْبَرِّ  
مَا دُمْتُمْ حُرُمًا  
وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي إِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ ○

١٠٠- جَعَلَ اللَّهُ الْكَعْبَةَ  
الْبَيْتَ الْحَرَامَ قِيَمًا لِلنَّاسِ  
وَالشَّهْرَ الْحَرَامَ  
وَالْهَدْيَ وَالْقَلَائِدَ  
ذَلِكَ لِتَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ  
يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ  
وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ○  
١٠١- اَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ

802 Water game i.e. game found in water e.g. water fowl fish etc Water includes sea river lake pond etc

803 The Sacred or Prohibited Months are explained in n 209 n 194 and n 687 v 3

804 See v 3 and n 688

805 All sorts of people from all parts of the earth gather during the Pilgrimage They must not think that they are strangers that nobody knows them and that they may behave as they like It is the House of God and He has supreme knowledge of all things of all thoughts and all motives As the next verse says while He is Oft forgiving Most Merciful, He is also strict in enforcing respect for His ordinances

And that God is  
Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful

- 102 The Apostle's duty is  
But to proclaim (the Message)  
But God knoweth all  
That ye reveal and ye conceal

- 103 Say "Not equal are things  
That are bad and things  
That are good, even though  
The abundance of the bad  
May dazzle thee, <sup>806</sup>  
But fear God, oh ye  
That understand,  
That (so) ye may prosper "

#### SECTION 14

- 104 **Q**h ye who believe !  
Ask not questions  
About things which,  
If made plain to you,  
May cause you trouble  
But if ye ask about things  
When the Qurān is being  
Revealed, they will be  
Made plain to you <sup>807</sup>  
God will forgive those  
For God is Oft-forgiving,  
Most Forbearing

- 105 Some people before you  
Did ask such questions, <sup>808</sup>

وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

١٠٢- مَا عَلَى الرَّسُولِ إِلَّا الْبَلَاغُ  
وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تُبْدُونَ وَمَا تَكْتُمُونَ

١٠٣- قُلْ لَا يَسْتَوِي الْخَبِيثُ  
وَالطَّيِّبُ وَلَوْ أَعْجَبَكَ كَثْرَةُ الْخَبِيثِ  
فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ يَا أُولِيَ الْأَلْبَابِ  
لَعَلَّكُمْ تَفْلَحُونَ

١٠٣

١٠٤- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَسْأَلُوا  
عَنْ أَشْيَاءَ إِنْ تُبْدَ لَكُمْ تَسْأَلُوا  
وَإِنْ تَسْأَلُوا  
عَنْهَا حِينَ يُنْزَلُ الْقُرْآنُ تُبْدَ لَكُمْ  
عَفَا اللَّهُ عَنْهَا  
وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ

١٠٥- قَدْ سَأَلَهَا قَوْمٌ مِّنْ قَبْلِكُمْ

<sup>806</sup> C ii 204 People often judge by quantity rather than quality They are dazzled by numbers their hearts are captured by what they see everywhere around them But the man of understanding and discrimination judges by a different standard He knows that good and bad things are not to be lumped together and carefully chooses the best which may be the scarcest and avoids the bad though evil may meet him at every step

<sup>807</sup> Many secrets are wisely hidden from us If the future were known to us we need not necessarily be happy In many cases we should be miserable If the inner meaning of some of the things we see before our eyes were disclosed to us it might cause a lot of mischief God's Message in so far as it is necessary for shaping our conduct is plain and open to us But there are many things too deep for us to understand either individually or collectively It would be foolish to pry into them as some foolish people tried to do in the time of the Apostle Where a matter is mentioned in the Quran we can reverently ask for its meaning That is not forbidden But we should never pass the bounds of (1) our own capacity to understand (2) the time and occasion when we ask questions and (3) the part of the Universal Plan which it is God's purpose to reveal to us

<sup>808</sup> For example the merely fractious questions asked of Moses by the Jews Q ii 68—71 They showed that they had no faith. When foolish questions are asked, and there is no answer, it also shakes the faith of the foolish ones

And on that account  
Lost their faith

- 106 It was not God  
Who instituted (superstitions<sup>809</sup>  
Like those of) a slit-ear  
She-camel, or a she-camel  
Let loose for free pasture,  
Or idol sacrifices for  
Twin-births in animals,  
Or stallion-camels  
Freed from work  
It was blasphemers  
Who invented a lie  
Against God, but most  
Of them lack wisdom
- 107 When it is said to them  
"Come to what God  
Hath revealed, come  
To the Apostle"  
They say "Enough for us<sup>810</sup>  
Are the ways we found  
Our fathers following"  
What! even though their fathers  
Were void of knowledge  
And guidance?
- 108 Oh ye who believe!  
Guard your own souls  
If ye follow (right) guidance,  
No hurt can come to you  
From those who stray  
The goal of you all  
Is to God it is He  
That will show you  
The truth of all  
That ye do<sup>811</sup>

ثُمَّ أَصْبَحُوا بِهَا كَافِرِينَ ○

١٠٦- مَا جَعَلَ اللَّهُ مِنْ بَحِيرَةٍ

وَلَا سَائِبَةٍ

وَلَا وَصِيلَةٍ

وَلَا حَامٍ

وَلَكِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا

يَفْتَرُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ

وَكَثُرَهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ ○

١٠٧- وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ تَعَالَوْا إِلَى مَا أَنْزَلَ

اللَّهُ وَإِلَى الرَّسُولِ

قَالُوا حَسْبُنَا مَا وَجَدْنَا عَلَيْهِ آبَاءَنَا

أَوَلَوْ كَانَ آبَاؤُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ شَيْئًا

وَلَا يَهْتَدُونَ ○

١٠٨- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا عَلَيْكُمْ

أَنْفُسَكُمْ

لَا يَضُرُّكُمْ مَنِ ضَلَّ إِذَا اهْتَدَيْتُمْ

إِلَى اللَّهِ فَرَجِعْكُمْ جَمِيعًا

فَيُنَبِّئَكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ○

809 A number of Arab Pagan superstitions are referred to. The Pagan mind not understanding the hidden secrets of nature attributed certain phenomena to divine anger and were assailed by superstitious fears which haunted their lives. If a she camel or other female domestic animal had a large number of young, she (or one of her offsprings) had her ear slit and she was dedicated to a god such an animal was a *baḥīra*. On return in safety from a journey, or on recovery from an illness a she camel was similarly dedicated and let loose for free pasture she was called a *saiba*. Where an animal bore twins, certain sacrifices or dedications were made to idols an animal so dedicated was a *waṣīla*. A stallion camel dedicated to the gods by certain rites was a *ham*. The particular examples lead to the general truth that superstition is due to ignorance, and is degrading to men and dishonouring to God.

810 C ii 170 Where an apostle of Truth comes to teach us the better way it is foolish to say 'What our ancestors did is good enough for us'.

811 Cf v 51 There the unity of God will reconcile different views. The unity of the one Judge will do perfect justice to each one's conduct, however different in form it may have appeared in this world.



109 **Oh** ye who believe !  
 When death approaches  
 Any of you, (take) witnesses  
 Among yourselves when making  
 Bequests,—two just men  
 Of your own (brotherhood)  
 Or others from outside  
 If ye are journeying  
 Through the earth,  
 And the chance of death  
 Befalls you (thus)  
 If ye doubt (their truth),  
 Detain them both  
 After prayer, and let them both  
 Swear by God  
 "We wish not in this  
 For any worldly gain,  
 Even though the (beneficiary)  
 Be our near relation  
 We shall hide not  
 The evidence before God  
 If we do, then behold !  
 The sin be upon us " 812

110 But if it gets known  
 That these two were guilty  
 Of the sin (of perjury),  
 Let two others stand forth  
 In their places,—nearest  
 In kin from among those  
 Who claim a lawful right 818  
 Let them swear by God  
 "We affirm that our witness  
 Is truer than that  
 Of those two, and that we  
 Have not trespassed (beyond  
 The truth) if we did,  
 Behold ! the wrong be  
 Upon us !"

111 That is most suitable  
 That they may give the evidence

١٠٩-يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا شَهَادَةُ بَيْنَكُمْ  
 إِذَا حَضَرَ أَحَدَكُمُ الْمَوْتُ  
 حِينَ الْوَصِيَّةِ اثْنَيْنِ ذَوَا عَدْلٍ مِنْكُمْ  
 أَوْ آخَرَيْنِ مِنْ غَيْرِكُمْ  
 إِنْ أَنْتُمْ ضَرَبْتُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ  
 فَأَصَابَتْكُمْ مُصِيبَةُ الْمَوْتِ  
 تَحْبِسُونَهُمَا مِنْ بَعْدِ الصَّلَاةِ  
 فَيُقْسِمْنَ بِاللَّهِ  
 إِنْ ارْتَبْتُمْ لَا نَشْتَرِي بِهِ ثَمَنًا  
 وَلَوْ كَانَ ذَا قُرْبَىٰ  
 وَلَا نَكْنُمُ شَهَادَةَ اللَّهِ  
 إِنَّا إِذَا لَمِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ ○

١١٠-وَأِنْ عُثِرَ عَلَىٰ أَنَّهُمَا اسْتَحَقَّا إِثْمًا  
 فَأُخْرَيْنِ يَفُوضْنَ مَقَامَهُمَا  
 مِنَ الَّذِينَ اسْتَحَقَّ عَلَيْهِمُ الْأَوَّلِينَ  
 فَيُقْسِمْنَ بِاللَّهِ  
 لَشَهَادَتُنَا أَحَقُّ مِنْ شَهَادَتِهِمَا  
 وَمَا عَدَدِينَا  
 إِنَّا إِذَا لَمِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ ○

١١١-ذَلِكَ أَذْنَىٰ أَنْ يَأْتُوا بِالشَّهَادَةِ

812 Ordinarily this oath should be decisive, and the matter must rest here But if it gets known that the oath was false, other evidence may be taken as in the next verse

813 *Istahabqa* = Deserved having something (good or evil) attributed to one, hence the alternative meanings (1) committed or was guilty (of a sin), (2) had or claimed a lawful right (to property) The procedure was followed in an actual case in the Apostle's lifetime A man from Medina died abroad having made over his goods to two friends to be delivered to his designated heirs in Medina They, however kept back a valuable silver cup When this was found out, oaths were taken from those who knew, and justice was done

In its true nature and shape,  
Or else they would fear  
That other oaths would be  
Taken after their oaths  
But fear God, and listen  
(To His counsel) for God  
Guideth not a rebellious people,

عَلَى وَجْهِهَا أَوْ يَخَافُوا أَنْ تُرَدَّ آيَمَانُ  
بَعْدَ آيَمَانِهِمْ ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاسْمَعُوا  
وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْفَاسِقِينَ ٥

C 75 — Jesus did feed his disciples by miracle,  
(v 112 123) But he claimed not divinity he was  
A true servant of God, to Whom doth belong  
The dominion of the heavens and the earth  
Glory and power are His, and His alone

## SECTION 15

112 One day will God  
Gather the apostles together,  
And ask "What was  
The response ye received  
(From men to your teaching) ?"  
They will say "We  
Have no knowledge it is Thou  
Who knowest in full  
All that is hidden" <sup>814</sup>

١١٢- بَوْمَ يَجْمَعُ اللَّهُ الرُّسُلَ  
فَيَقُولُ مَاذَا أَجَبْتُمُ  
قَالُوا لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا  
إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ ٥

113 When will God say  
"Oh Jesus the son of Mary!  
Recount My favour <sup>815</sup>  
To thee and to thy mother  
Behold! I strengthened thee <sup>816</sup>  
With the holy spirit,  
So that thou didst speak  
To the people in childhood  
And in maturity <sup>817</sup>  
Behold! I taught thee  
The Book and Wisdom, <sup>818</sup>  
The Law and the Gospel  
And behold! thou makest <sup>819</sup>  
Out of clay, as it were,

١١٣- إِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يٰعِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ  
ادْكُرْ نِعْمَتِي عَلَيْكَ وَعَلَىٰ وَالِدَتِكَ  
إِذْ آتَيْنَاكَ رُوحَ الْقُدُسِ  
تَكْلِمُ النَّاسِ فِي الْمَهْدِ وَكَهْلًا  
وَإِذْ عَلَّمْنَاكَ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ  
وَالتَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ  
وَإِذْ تَخْلُقُ مِنَ الطِّينِ

814 A scene of the Day of Reckoning is put before us in graphic words showing the responsibility and the limitations of the men of God, sent to preach God's Message to men with special reference to the Message of Jesus. The Messengers are sent to preach the Truth. What fantastic forms the Message takes in men's reactions to it was beyond their knowledge at the time, and beyond their responsibility.

815 In a solemn scene before the Court of Judgment Jesus is asked to recount all the mercies and favours shown to him so that his followers should become ashamed of their ingratitude in corrupting that Message when they could have done so much in profiting by its purity and spiritual truth. This argument continues to the end of the Sūra.

816 Cf. ii 87, and iii 62 n 401

817 Cf. iii 46 and n 388

818 Cf. iii 48

819 Cf. iii 49, and n 390

The figure of a bird,  
By My leave,  
And thou breathest into it,  
And it becometh a bird  
By My leave,  
And thou healest those  
Born blind, and the lepers  
By My leave  
And behold! thou  
Bringest forth the dead  
By My leave <sup>820</sup>  
And behold! I did  
Restrain the Children of Israel  
From (violence to) thee <sup>821</sup>  
When thou didst show them  
The Clear Signs,  
And the unbelievers among them  
Said 'This is nothing  
But evident magic' <sup>822</sup>

- 114 "And behold! I inspired  
The Disciples to have faith  
In Me and Mine Apostle  
They said, 'We have faith,  
And do thou <sup>823</sup> bear witness  
That we bow to God  
As Muslims' " <sup>824</sup>

- 115 Behold! the Disciples said  
"Oh Jesus the son of Mary!  
Can thy Lord send down to us  
A Table set (with viands)

كَهَيْئَةِ الطَّيْرِ بِأَذْنِي  
فَتَكُونُ مِنْهَا  
وَتَكُونُ طَيْرًا بِأَذْنِي  
وَتُخْرِجُ الرُّكْمَةَ وَالْأَبْرَصَ بِأَذْنِي  
وَأَذْخِرُ الْمَوْتَى بِأَذْنِي  
وَأَذْكَفْتُ سَمِيَّ إِسْرَءِيلَ عَنْكَ  
إِذْ جِئْتَهُمْ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ  
فَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْهُمْ  
إِنْ هَذَا إِلَّا سِحْرٌ مُبِينٌ ○

١١٤- وَإِذْ أَوْحَيْتُ إِلَى الْحَوَارِيِّينَ  
أَنْ آمِنُوا بِي وَبِرَسُولِي  
قَالُوا أَمَنَّا  
وَاشْهَد بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ ○

١١٥- إِذْ قَالَ الْحَوَارِيُّونَ يَعْيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ  
هَلْ يَسْطِيعُ رَبُّكَ أَنْ يُرْسِلَ عَلَيْنَا مَائِدَةً

820 Note how the words by My leave are repeated with each miracle to emphasize the fact that they arose not out of the power or will of Jesus but by the leave and will and power of God who is supreme over Jesus as He is over all other mortals

821 The Jews were seeking to take the life of Jesus long before their final attempt to crucify him see Luke iv 28-29 Their attempt to crucify him was also foiled, according to the teaching we have received Q iv 157

822 According to Luke (xi 15), when Christ performed the miracle of casting out devils, the Jews said he did it through the chief of the devils, i.e., they accused him of black magic No such miracle of casting out devils is mentioned in the Quran, nor are we asked to believe in demoniacal possession of that kind But Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad were all accused of magic and sorcery, by those who could find no other explanation of God's power

823 Thou refers to Jesus, who is being addressed by his Disciples Cf iii 52

824 Before or after Muhammad's life on this earth, all who bowed to God's Will were Muslims, and their religion is Islam Cf iii 52, and n 392.

From heaven ?" Said Jesus .  
 " Fear God, if ye have faith." <sup>825</sup>

مِنَ السَّمَاءِ قَالَ اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ

116 They said " We only wish  
 To eat thereof and satisfy  
 Our hearts, and to know  
 That thou hast indeed  
 Told us the truth , and  
 That we ourselves may be  
 Witnesses to the miracle "

١١٦- قَالُوا نُرِيدُ أَنْ نَأْكَلَ مِنْهَا وَ  
 تَطْمَئِنَّ قُلُوبُنَا  
 وَنَعْلَمَ أَنْ قَدْ صَدَقْتَنَا  
 الرَّحْمَنُ وَنَكُونَ عَلَيْهَا مِنَ الشَّاهِدِينَ ○

117 Said Jesus the son of Mary  
 " Oh God our Lord '  
 Send us from heaven  
 A Table set (with viands), <sup>826</sup>  
 That there may be for us—  
 For the first and the last of us—  
 A solemn festival  
 And a Sign from Thee ,  
 And provide for our sustenance, <sup>827</sup>  
 For Thou art the best  
 Sustainer (of our needs) "

١١٧- قَالَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ اللَّهُمَّ رَبَّنَا  
 أَنْزِلْ عَلَيْنَا مَائِدَةً مِنَ السَّمَاءِ  
 تَكُونُ لَنَا عِيدًا لِأَوَّلِنَا وَآخِرِنَا  
 وَآيَةً مِنْكَ  
 وَارْزُقْنَا وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الرَّازِقِينَ ○

118 God said " I will  
 Send it down unto you  
 But if any of you  
 After that resisteth faith,  
 I will punish him  
 With a penalty such  
 As I have not inflicted  
 On any one among

١١٨- قَالَ اللَّهُ إِنِّي مُنْزِلُهَا عَلَيْكُمْ  
 فَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بَعْدَ مَعْذِرَتِكُمْ  
 فَإِنِّي أُعَذِّبُهُ عَذَابًا  
 لَا أُعَذِّبُهُ أَحَدًا مِّنْ

825 The request of the Disciples savours a little of (1) want of faith (2) too much attention to physical food and (3) a childish desire for miracles or Signs All these three can be proved from the Canonical Gospels (1) Simon Peter quite early in the story asked Jesus to depart from him as he (Simon) was a sinful man (Luke v 8) The same Peter afterwards denied his Master three several times shamelessly when the Master was in the power of his enemies And one of the Disciples (Judas) actually betrayed Jesus (2) Even in the Canonical Gospels so many of the miracles are concerned with food and drink e.g. the turning of the water into wine (John ii 1 11), the conversion of five loaves and two small fishes into food for 5 000 men (John vi 5 13) this being the *only* miracle recorded in all the four Gospels the miraculous number of fishes caught for food (Luke v 4 11), the cursing of the fig tree because it had no fruit (Matt xxi 18 19) the allegory of eating Christ's flesh and drinking his blood (John vi 53 57) (3) Because the Samaritans would not receive Jesus into their village the Disciples James and John wanted a fire to come down from heaven and consume them (Luke ix 54)

826 The words of the Prayer seem to suggest the Last Supper Cf also the vision of Peter in The Acts of the Apostles x 9 16

827 As in Islam so in Christ's Prayer sustenance should be taken for both physical and spiritual strength, especially the latter 'Give us this day our daily bread' seems the rendering of a literalist whose attention was fixed too much on bread

All the peoples " 828

## SECTION 16

119 And behold ! God will say  
 "Oh Jesus the son of Mary !  
 Didst thou say unto men,  
 'Worship me and my mother  
 As gods in derogation of God ' ?"  
 He will say " Glory to Thee !  
 Never could I say  
 What I had no right  
 (To say) Had I said  
 Such a thing, Thou wouldst  
 Indeed have known it  
 Thou knowest what is  
 In my heart, though I  
 Know not what is  
 In Thine For Thou  
 Knowest in full  
 All that is hidden 829

120 " Never said I to them  
 Aught except what Thou  
 Didst command me  
 To say, to wit, ' Worship  
 God, my Lord and your Lord ', 830  
 And I was a witness  
 Over them whilst I dwelt  
 Amongst them, when Thou  
 Didst take me up,  
 Thou wast the Watcher  
 Over them, and Thou  
 Art a witness to all things 831

121 " If Thou dost punish them,  
 They are Thy servants

الْعَالَمِينَ ٥

١١٩- وَإِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يٰعِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ  
 ءَأَنْتَ قُلْتَ لِلنَّاسِ اتَّخِذُونِي وَأُمِّي  
 إِلَهَيْنِ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ  
 قَالَ سُبْحٰنَكَ  
 مَا يَكُونُ لِي أَنْ أَقُولَ مَا لَيْسَ لِي بِحَقِّ  
 إِنْ كُنْتُ قُلْتُهُ فَقَدْ عَلِمْتَهُ  
 تَعْلَمُ مَا فِي نَفْسِي  
 وَلَا أَعْلَمُ مَا فِي نَفْسِكَ  
 إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ ٥

١٢٠- مَا قُلْتُ لَهُمْ إِلَّا مَا أَمَرْتَنِي بِهِ  
 أَنْ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ رَبِّي وَرَبَّكُمْ  
 وَكُنْتُ عَلَيْهِمْ شَهِيدًا  
 مَا دُمْتُ فِيهِمْ فَلَمَّا تَوَفَّيْتَنِي  
 كُنْتُ أَنْتَ الرَّقِيبَ عَلَيْهِمْ  
 وَأَنْتَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ ٥

١٢١- إِنْ تُعَذِّبْهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ عِبَادُكَ

٥  
 ذُو  
 الْمَلِكِ  
 الْمَلِكِ  
 الْمَلِكِ

828 A forceful allegory It is a wicked generation that asks for Signs and Miracles Usually they are not vouchsafed But where they are the responsibility of those who ask for them is increased If after that they reject faith invent lies, and go after false gods or false ideals their penalty will be worse than that of other people How this works out practically among those who call themselves Christians is exemplified in such books as the late Mr W T Stead's "If Christ Came to Chicago?"

829 Jesus disclaims here any knowledge of the sort of things that are attributed to him by those who take his name The worship of Mary though repudiated by the Protestants was widely spread in the earlier Churches both in the East and the West

830 Cf v 75, and n 782

831 Jesus here acknowledges that he was mortal, and that his knowledge was limited like that of a mortal

If Thou dost forgive them,  
Thou art the Exalted,  
The Wise "832

- 122 God will say " This is  
A day on which  
The truthful will profit  
From their truth theirs  
Are Gardens, with rivers  
Flowing beneath,— their eternal  
Home God well-pleased  
With them, and they with God  
That is the great Salvation,<sup>833</sup>  
(The fulfilment of all desires)

- 123 To God doth belong the dominion  
Of the heavens and the earth,  
And all that is therein,  
And it is He who hath power  
Over all things

وَلَا تَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ  
فَإِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ۝

۱۲۲- قَالَ اللَّهُ هَذَا يَوْمُ يَنْفَعُ الصَّادِقِينَ  
صُدُّوا لَهُمْ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا  
الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا  
رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ  
ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ ۝

۱۲۳- لِلَّهِ مُلْكُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ  
وَمَا فِيهِنَّ  
وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ۝



832 A Master can justly punish His servants for disobedience no one can say Him nay, for He is high above all But if He chooses to forgive He in His wisdom sees things that we mortals cannot see This is the limit of intercession that men of God can make on behalf of sinners

833 *Faux* = Felicity happiness achievement, salvation, the attainment or fulfilment of desires What a beautiful definition of salvation or the end of life!—that we should win God's good pleasure and that we should reach the stage at which His good pleasure is all in all to us

## APPENDIX II

On the *Taurāt* (see v 47, n 753)

The *Taurāt* is frequently referred to in the Qurān. It is well to have clear ideas as to what it exactly means. Vaguely we may say that it was the Jewish Scripture. It is mentioned with honour as having been, in its purity, a true revelation from God.

To translate it by the words "The Old Testament" is obviously wrong. The "Old Testament" is a Christian term, applied to a body of old Jewish records. The Protestants and the Roman Catholics are not agreed precisely as to the number of records to be included in the canon of the "Old Testament." They use the term in contradistinction to the "New Testament," whose composition we shall discuss in Appendix III.

Nor is it correct to translate *Taurāt* as the "Pentateuch," a Greek term meaning the "Five Books." These are the first five books of the Old Testament, known as Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. They contain a semi-historical and legendary narrative of the history of the world from the Creation to the time of the arrival of the Jews in the Promised Land. There are in them some beautiful idylls but there are also stories of incest, fraud, cruelty, and treachery, not always disapproved. A great part of the Mosaic Law is embodied in this narrative. The Books are traditionally ascribed to Moses, but it is certain that they were not written by Moses or in an age either contemporary with Moses or within an appreciable distance of time from Moses. They were in their present form probably compiled some time after the return of the Jews from the Babylonian Captivity. The decree of Cyrus permitting such return was in 536 B.C. Some books now included in the Old Testament, such as Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi were admittedly written after the return from the Captivity, Malachi being as late as 420-397 B.C. The compilers of the Pentateuch of course used some ancient material, some of that material is actually named Egyptian and Chaldean terms are relics of local colour and contemporary documents.

But there are some ludicrous slips, which show that the compilers did not always understand their material. Modern criticism distinguishes two distinct sources among the documents of different dates used by the editors. For the sake of brevity and convenience they may be called (a) Jehovistic, and (b) Elohist. Then there are later miscellaneous interpolations. They sometimes overlap and sometimes contradict each other.

Logically speaking, the Book of Joshua, which describes the entry into the Promised Land, should be bracketed with the Pentateuch, and many writers speak of the six books together as the Hexateuch (Greek term for Six Books).

The Apocrypha contains certain Books which are not admitted as Canonical in the English Bible. But the early Christians received them as part of the Jewish Scriptures, and the Council of Trent (A.D. 1545-1563) seems to have recognized the greater part of them as Canonical. The statement in 2 Esdras (about the first century

A D ) that the law was burnt and Ezra (say, about 458-457 B C ) was inspired to re-write it, is probably true as to the historical fact that the law was lost, and that what we have now is no earlier than the time of Ezra, and some of it a good deal later

So far we have spoken of the Christian view of the Old Testament What is the Jewish view? The Jews divide their Scripture into three parts (1) the Law (*Torah*), (2) the Prophets (*Nebim*), and (3) the Writings (*Kethubim*) The corresponding Arabic words would be (1) *Taurat*, (2) *Nabiyin*, and (3) *Kutub* This division was probably current in the time of Jesus In Luke xxiv 44 Jesus refers to the Law, the Prophets and the Psalms In other places (e g, Matt vii 12) Jesus refers to the Law and the Prophets as summing up the whole Scripture In the Old Testament Book, 2 Chronicles xxxiv 30, the reference to the Book of the Covenant must be to the *Torah* or the original Law This is interesting, as the Qurān frequently refers to the Covenant with reference to the Jews The modern Christian terms "Old Testament" and "New Testament" are substitutes for the older terms "Old Covenant" and "New Covenant" The Samaritans, who claim to be the real Children of Israel and disavow the Jews as schismatics from their Law of Moses, only recognise the Pentateuch, of which they have their own version slightly different from that in the Old Testament

The view of the school of Higher Criticism is radically destructive According to Renan it is doubtful whether Moses was not a myth Two versions of Sacred History existed, different in language, style, and spirit, and they were combined together into a narrative in the reign of Hezekiah (B C 727 697) This forms the greater part of the Pentateuch as it exists to day, excluding the greater part of Deuteronomy and Leviticus In the reign of Josiah about 622 B C, certain priests and scribes (with Jeremiah the prophet) promulgated a new code, pretending that they had found it in the Temple (II Kings, xxii 8) This Law (*Torah*=*Taurat*) was the basis of Judaism, the new religion then founded in Palestine This was further completed by the sacerdotal and Levitical *Torah*, compiled under the inspiration of Ezekiel, say, about 575 B C, and contained mainly in the Book of Leviticus, with scattered fragments in Exodus, Numbers, and Joshua We are entitled to accept the general results of a scientific examination of documents, probabilities, and dates, even though we reject the premise which we believe to be false, *viz*, that God does not send inspired Books through inspired Prophets We believe that Moses existed, that he was an inspired man of God, that he gave a message which was afterwards distorted or lost, that attempts were made by Israel at various times to reconstruct that Message, and that the *Taurat* as we have it is (in view of the statement in 2 Esdras) no earlier than the middle of fifth century B C

The primitive *Torah* must have been in old Hebrew, but there is no Hebrew manuscript of the Old Testament which can be dated with certainty earlier than 916 A D Hebrew ceased to be a spoken language with the Jews during or after the Captivity, and by the time we come to the period of Jesus, most cultivated Hebrews used the Greek language, and others used Aramaic (including Syriac and Chaldee), Latin, or local dialects There were also Arabic versions For historical purposes the most important versions were the Greek version, known as the Septuagint, and the Latin version, known as the Vulgate. The Septuagint was supposed to have been prepared by 70 or 72 Jews (Latin, septuaginta=seventy) working independently and at different times, the earliest portion dating from about 284 B.C This version was



used by the Jews of Alexandria and the Hellenized Jews who were spread over all parts of the Roman Empire. The Vulgate was a Latin translation made by the celebrated Father of the Christian Church, St. Jerome, from Hebrew, early in the fifth century A.D., superseding the older Latin versions. Neither the Septuagint nor the Vulgate have an absolutely fixed or certain text. The present standard text of the Vulgate as accepted by the Roman Catholic Church was issued by Pope Clement VIII (A.D. 1592-1605).

It will be seen therefore that there is no standard text of the Old Testament in its Hebrew form. The versions differ from each other frequently in minor particulars and sometimes in important particulars. The Pentateuch itself is only a small portion of the Old Testament. It is in narrative form, and includes the laws and regulations associated with the name of Moses, but probably compiled and edited from older sources by Ezra (or Esdras, Arabic, 'Uzair) in the 5th century B.C. As Renan remarks in the preface to his *History of the People of Israel*, the "definite constitution of Judaism" may be dated only from the time of Ezra. The very early Christians were divided into two parties. One was a Judaizing party, which wished to remain in adherence to the Jewish laws and customs while recognizing the mission of Jesus. The other, led by Paul, broke away from Jewish customs and traditions. Ultimately Pauline Christianity won. But both parties recognized the Old Testament in its present form (in one or another of its varying versions) as Scripture. It was the merit of Islam that it pointed out that as scripture it was of no value, although it recognized Moses as an inspired apostle and his original Law as having validity in his period until it was superseded. In its criticism of the Jewish position it said in effect: "You have lost your original Law, even what you have now as its substitute, you do not honestly follow, is it not better, now that an inspired Teacher is living among you, that you should follow him rather than quibble over uncertain texts?"

But the Jews in the Apostle's time (and since) went a great deal by the Talmud, or a body of oral exposition, reduced to writing in different Schools of doctors and learned men. "Talmud" in Hebrew is connected with the Arabic root in *Talmiz*, "disciple" or "student." The Talmudists took the divergent texts of the Old Testament and in interpreting them by a mass of traditional commentary and legendary lore, evolved a standard body of teaching. The Talmudists are of special interest to us, as, in the sixth century A.D., just before the preaching of Islam, they evolved the Massorah, which may be regarded as the body of authoritative Jewish Hadith, to which references are to be found in passages addressed to the Jews in the Quran.

The first part of the Talmud is called the *Mishna*,—a collection of traditions and decisions prepared by the Rabbi Judah about 150 A.D. He summed up the results of a great mass of previous rabbinical writings. The *Mishna* is the "Second Law." Cf. the Arabic *Thān in* = second. "It bound heavy burdens, grievous to be borne, and laid them on men's shoulders." Matt. xxiii. 4.

There were also many Targums or paraphrases of the Law among the Jews. "Targum" is connected in root with the Arabic word *Tarjama*, "he translated." There were many Targums, mostly in Aramaic, and they constituted the teaching of the Law to the masses of the Jewish people.

The correct translation of the *Taurât* is therefore "The Law" In its original form it was promulgated by Moses, and is recognized in Islam as having been an inspired Book But it was lost before Islam was preached What passed as "The Law" with the Jews in the Apostle's time was the mass of traditional writing which I have tried to review in this Appendix

Authorities *Encyclopaedia Britannica* Bible ' *Helps to the Study of the Bible* Oxford University Press A F Kirkpatrick, *Divine Library of the Old Testament* C E Hammond, *Outlines of Textual Criticism*, E Renan, *History of Israel*, G F Moore *Literature of the Old Testament*, and the bibliography therein (Home University Library)

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## APPENDIX III

On the *Injil* (see v 49, n 757)

Just as the *Taurāt* is not the Old Testament, or the Pentateuch, as now received by the Jews and Christians, so the *Injil* mentioned in the Qurān is certainly not the New Testament, and it is not the four Gospels as now received by the Christian Church, but an original Gospel which was promulgated by Jesus, as the *Taurāt* was promulgated by Moses and the Qurān by Muhammad Mustafā

The New Testament as now received consists of (a) four Gospels with varying contents (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John), and other miscellaneous matter, viz, (b) The Acts of the Apostles (probably written by Luke and purporting to describe the progress of the Christian Church under St Peter and St Paul from the supposed Crucifixion of Jesus to about 61 A D), (c) twenty one Letters or Epistles (the majority written by St Paul to various churches or individuals, but a few written by other Disciples, and of a general nature), and (d) the Book of Revelation or Apocalypse (ascribed to St John, and containing mystic visions and prophecies, of which it is difficult to understand the meaning)

As Prof F C Burkitt remarks (*Canon of the New Testament*), it is an odd miscellany "The four biographies of Jesus Christ are not all independent of each other, and neither of them was intended by its writer to form one of a quartette But they are all put side by side, unharmonised, one of them being actually imperfect at the end, and one being only the first volume of a larger work" All this body of unmethodical literature was casual in its nature No wonder, because the early Christians expected the end of the world very soon The four canonical Gospels were only four out of many, and some others besides the four have survived Each writer just wrote down some odd sayings of the Master that he recollected Among the miracles described there is only one which is described in all the four Gospels, and others were described and believed in in other Gospels, which are not mentioned in any of the four canonical Gospels Some of the Epistles contain expositions of doctrine, but this has been interpreted differently by different Churches There must have been hundreds of such Epistles, and not all the Epistles now received as canonical were always so received or intended to be so received The Apocalypse also was not the only one in the field There were others They were prophecies of "things which must shortly come to pass", they could not have been meant for long preservation, "for the time is at hand"

When were these four Gospels written? By the end of the second century A D they were in existence, but it does not follow that they had been selected by that date to form a canon They were merely pious productions comparable to Dean Farrar's *Life of Christ* There were other Gospels besides And further, the writers of two of them, Mark and Luke, were not among the Twelve Disciples "called" by Jesus About the Gospel of St John there is much controversy as to authorship, date, and even as to whether it was all written by one person Clement of Rome (about 97 A D)

and Polycarp (about 112 A D) quote sayings of Jesus in a form different from those found in the present canonical Gospels. Polycarp (Epistle, vii) inveighs much against men "who pervert the sayings of the Lord to their own lusts," and he wants to turn "to the Word handed down to us from the beginning," thus referring to a Book (or a Tradition) much earlier than the four orthodox Gospels. An Epistle of St Barnabas and an Apocalypse of St Peter were recognized by Presbyter Clement of Alexandria (flourished about 180 A D). The Apocalypse of St John, which is a part of the present Canon in the West, forms no part of the Peshitta (Syriac) version of the Eastern Christians, which was produced about 411-433 A D and which was used by the Nestorian Christians. It is probable that the Peshitta was the version (or an Arabic form of it) used by the Christians in Arabia in the time of the Apostle. The final form of the New Testament canon for the West was fixed in the fourth century A D (say, about 367 A D) by Athanasius and the Nicene creed. The beautiful Codex Sinaiticus which was acquired for the British Museum in 1934, and is one of the earliest complete manuscripts of the Bible, may be dated about the fourth century. It is written in the Greek language. Fragments of unknown Gospels have also been discovered, which do not agree with the received canonical Gospels.

The *Injil* (Greek, Evangel = Gospel) spoken of by the Qurān is not the New Testament. It is not the four Gospels now received as canonical. It is the single Gospel which, Islam teaches, was revealed to Jesus, and which he taught. Fragments of it survive in the received canonical Gospels and in some others, of which traces survive (e.g., the Gospel of Childhood or the Nativity, the Gospel of St Barnabas, etc.) Muslims are therefore right in respecting the present Bible (New Testament and Old Testament), though they reject the peculiar doctrines taught by orthodox Christianity or Judaism. They claim to be in the true tradition of Abraham, and therefore all that is of value in the older revelations, it is claimed, is incorporated in the teaching of the Last of the Prophets.

In v 85 we are told that nearest in love to the Believers among the People of the Book are the Christians. I do not agree that this does not apply to modern Christians "because they are practically atheists or freethinkers." I think that Christian thought (like the world's thought) has learnt a great deal from the protest of Islam against priest domination, class domination, and sectarianism, and its insistence on making this life pure and beautiful while we are in it. We must stretch a friendly hand to all who are sincere and in sympathy with our ideals.

**Authorities.** The first two mentioned for Appendix II and in addition Prof I C Burkitt on the Canon of the New Testament in *Religion* June 1934 the Journal of Transactions of the Society for Promoting the Study of Religion. R W Mackay *Rise and Progress of Christianity*, G R S Mead *The Gospel and the Gospels* B W Bacon *Making of the New Testament* with its Bibliography. R Hone *The Apocryphal New Testament* London 1820, H I Bell and F C Skeat, *Fragments of an Unknown Gospel and other Christian Papyri*, published by the British Museum, 1935.

INTRODUCTION TO SŪRA VI (*An'ām*)

This is a Sūra of the late Meccan period. The greater part of it was revealed entire. Its place in the traditional order of arrangement is justified by logical considerations. We have already had the spiritual history of mankind, a discussion of the earlier revelations and how they were lost or corrupted, the regulations for the outer life of the new Community, and the points in which the Jews and Christians failed to maintain the central doctrine of Islam—the unity of God. The next step now taken is to expound this doctrine in relation to Pagan Arabia.

The nature of God and the method by which He reveals Himself are first expounded, and the weakness of Paganism is exposed (vi 1—30, and C 76)

The emptiness of this world's life is contrasted with the evidences of God's wonderful handiwork in all Creation. It is He who holds the keys of the Unseen and the secrets of all that we see (vi 31—60, and C 77)

God's working in His world and His constant care and guidance should give a clue to His unity, as it did to Abraham when he argued with those who worshipped false gods (vi 61—82, and C 78)

The succession of prophets after Abraham kept God's truth alive, and led up to the Qurān. How can man fail to understand the majesty and goodness of God, when he contemplates God's nature and His Messages to mankind? (vi 83—110, and C 79)

The obstinate and the rebellious are deceived—they should be avoided. Though they turn for assistance to each other, they will receive due punishment (vi 111—129, and C 80)

God's decrees will come to pass, in spite of all the crimes and superstitions of the ungodly (vi 130—150, and C 81)

The better course is to follow the straight Way, the Way of God, as directed in the Qurān, with unity and the full dedication of our lives (vi 151—165, and C 82)

C 76.—God did separate Light from Darkness,  
 (vi 1 30) He reigns not only in heaven but also  
 On earth, Mercy is His Law,  
 To Him shall we all return  
 At the end of all things. How can we  
 Then depart from truth and forge lies  
 Against Him? It is folly to say that there is  
 Nothing beyond this our present life

## Sūra VI

## An'am, or Cattle

*In the name of God, Most Gracious,  
Most Merciful*

1 Praise be to God,  
Who created the heavens  
And the earth,  
And made the Darkness  
And the Light  
Yet those who reject Faith  
Hold (others) as equal<sup>834</sup>  
With their Guardian-Lord<sup>835</sup>

2 He it is Who created<sup>836</sup>  
You from clay, and then  
Decreed a stated term<sup>837</sup>  
(For you) And there is  
In His Presence another  
Determined term, yet  
Ye doubt within yourselves<sup>1</sup>

3 And He is God  
In the heavens  
And on earth  
He knoweth what ye  
Hide, and what ye reveal,  
And He knoweth  
The (recompense) which  
Ye earn (by your deeds)<sup>838</sup>



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

١- الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ  
وَجَعَلَ الظُّلُمَاتِ وَالنُّورَ  
ثُمَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِرَبِّهِمْ يَعْدِلُونَ

٢- هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ طِينٍ  
ثُمَّ قَضَى أَجَلًا  
وَأَجَلٌ مُسَمًّى عِنْدَهُ  
ثُمَّ أَنْتُمْ تَمْتَرُونَ

٣- وَهُوَ اللَّهُ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَفِي الْأَرْضِ  
يَعْلَمُ سِرَّكُمْ  
وَجَهْرَكُمْ  
وَيَعْلَمُ مَا تَكْسِبُونَ

834 'Adala has various meanings (1) to hold something is equal to something else as here to balance nicely (2) to deal justly as between one party and another xlii 15 (3) to give compensation or reparation or something as equivalent to something else vi 70 (4) to turn the balance the right way to give a right disposition to give a just bias or proportion lxxxii 7 (5) to turn the balance the wrong way to swerve to show bias iv 135

835 The argument is threefold (1) God created everything you see and know how can you then set up any of His own creatures as equal to Him? (2) He is your own Guardian Lord, He cherishes and loves you how can you be so ungrateful as to run after something else? (3) Darkness and Light are to help you to distinguish between the true from the false how then can you confound the true God with your false ideas and superstitions? There may also be a repudiation of the Duality of old Persian theology, Light and Darkness are not conflicting Powers, they are both creatures of the one true God

836 After the general argument the argument comes to man personally Can such a miserable creature created from clay put himself in opposition to his Creator? And can man forget or doubt that he is here only for a short term of probation? And then after a period comes the Day of Account before God

837 This life is a period of probation The other term leads up to Judgment

838 It is folly to suppose that God only reigns in the heavens He also reigns on earth He knows all our secret thoughts and motives, and the real worth of all that is behind what we care to show It is by our deeds that He judges us, for our deeds, whether good or evil, we shall get due recompense in due time.

4 But never did a single  
One of the Signs  
Of their Lord reach them,  
But they turned  
Away therefrom

5 And now they reject  
15 The truth when it reaches  
Them but soon shall they  
Learn the reality of what  
They used to mock at

6 See they not how many  
Of those before them  
We did destroy?—<sup>839</sup>  
Generations We had established  
On the earth, in strength  
Such as We have not given  
To you—for whom  
We poured out rain  
From the skies in abundance,  
And gave (fertile) streams  
Flowing beneath their (feet)  
Yet for their sins  
We destroyed them,  
And raised in their wake  
Fresh generations  
(To succeed them)

7 If We had sent  
Unto thee a written  
(Message) on parchment,<sup>839</sup>  
So that they could  
Touch it with their hands,  
The Unbelievers would  
Have been sure to say  
"This is nothing but

٤- وَمَا نَأْتِيهِمْ مِنْ آيَةٍ مِنْ آيَاتِ  
رَبِّهِمْ

إِلَّا كَانُوا عَنْهَا مُعْرِضِينَ ۝

٥- فَقَدْ كَذَّبُوا بِالْحَقِّ لَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ

فَسَوْفَ يَأْتِيهِمْ أَجْلُهُمْ

مَا كَانُوا بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِئُونَ ۝

٦- أَلَمْ يَرَوْا كَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ

مِنْ قَبْلٍ مَكَّنَّاهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ

مَا لَمْ نُمَكِّنْ لَهُمْ

وَأَرْسَلْنَا السَّمَاءَ عَلَيْهِمْ مِدْرَارًا

وَجَعَلْنَا الْأَنْهَارَ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهِمْ

فَأَهْلَكْنَاهُمْ

بِذُنُوبِهِمْ

وَأَنشَأْنَا مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ قَرْنًا آخَرِينَ ۝

٧- وَلَوْ نَزَّلْنَاهُ عَلَيْكَ كِتَابًا فِي قُرْطَاسٍ

فَلَمَسُوهُ بِأَيْدِيهِمْ

لَقَالِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا

إِنْ هَذَا إِلَّا

839 Now comes the argument from history looking backwards and forwards. If we are so short sighted or arrogant as to suppose that we are firmly established on this earth secure in our privileges, we are reminded of much greater nations in the past who failed in their duty and were wiped out. In their fate we must read our own fate if we fail likewise! But those without faith instead of facing facts squarely turn away therefrom.

839 a *Qurṭas* in the Apostle's life, could only mean 'parchment' which was commonly used as writing material in Western Asia from the 2nd century B.C. The word was derived from the Greek *Chartes* (Cf. Latin *Charela*) Paper as we know it made from rags was first used by the Arabs after the conquest of Samarkand in 751 A.D. The Chinese had used it by the 2nd century B.C. The Arabs introduced it into Europe. It was used in Greece in the 11th or 12th century and in Spain through Sicily in the 12th century. The Papyrus made from an Egyptian reed, was used in Egypt as early as 2500 B.C. It gave place to Paper in Egypt in the 10th century.

Obvious magic ! " 840

- 8 They say " Why is not  
An angel sent down to him ? "  
If We did send down  
An angel, the matter  
Would be settled at once,  
And no respite  
Would be granted them 841

- 9 If We had made it  
An angel, We should  
Have sent him as a man,  
And We should certainly  
Have caused them confusion  
In a matter which is  
Already to them  
Obscure and confused 842

- 10 Mocked were (many)  
Apostles before thee ,  
But the scoffers  
Were hemmed in  
By the thing that they mocked 843

## SECTION 2

- 11 Say " Travel through the earth  
And see what was the end  
Of those who rejected Truth "

- 12 Say " To whom belongeth  
All that is in the heavens

سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ ○

٨- وَقَالُوا لَوْلَا أُنْزِلَ عَلَيْهِ مَلَكٌ  
وَلَوْ أَنْزَلْنَا مَلَكًا  
لَقُضِيَ الْأَمْرُ  
ثُمَّ لَا يُنْظَرُونَ ○

٩- وَلَوْ جَعَلْنَاهُ مَلَكًا  
لَجَعَلْنَاهُ رَجُلًا  
وَلَلْبَسْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ  
مَا يَلْبَسُونَ ○

١٠- وَلَقَدْ اسْتَمْتَرُوا بِرُسُلٍ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ  
فَخَاقَ بِالَّذِينَ سَخِرُوا مِنْهُمْ  
مَا كَانُوا بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِئُونَ ۚ

١١- قُلْ سِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ ثُمَّ انظُرُوا  
كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُكَذِّبِينَ ○

١٢- قُلْ لِمَنْ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ

840 The materialists want to see actual physical material things before them; but if such a thing came from an unusual source or expressed things they cannot understand they give it some name like magic or superstition or whatever name is in fashion and they are not helped at all in attaining faith because their hearts are diseased (u 10)

841 (f u 210) An angel is a heavenly being a manifestation of God's glory invisible to men who live gross material lives. Such men are given plenty of respite in which to turn in repentance to God and make themselves worthy of His light. But if their prayer to see an angel were granted it would do them no good for they would be destroyed as darkness is destroyed by light.

842 Supposing an angel should appear to their grosser senses he could only do it in human form. In that case their present confused notions about spiritual life would be still more confounded. They would say " We wanted to see an angel and we have only seen a man ! "

843 The scoffers were mocked by the thing that they mocked ' would express epigrammatically part of the sense but not the whole. Hemmed in implies that the logic of events turned the tables and as a man might be besieged and surrounded by an enemy in war and would be forced to surrender so these mockers will find that events would justify Truth not them. The mockers of Jesus—where were they when Titus destroyed Jerusalem? The mockers who drove out Muhammad from Mecca—what was their plight when Muhammad came back in triumph and they sued for mercy,—and he gave it to them! According to the Latin proverb Great is Truth and must prevail.



And on earth ?" Say  
 " To God He hath inscribed  
 For Himself (the rule of) Mercy <sup>844</sup>  
 That He will gather you  
 Together for the Day of Judgment,  
 There is no doubt whatever  
 It is they who have lost  
 Their own souls, that will  
 Not believe

وَالْأَرْضُ قُلُّ لِّلّٰهِ كُتِبَ  
 عَلَىٰ نَفْسِهِ الرَّحْمَةُ  
 لِيَجْئَعَكُمْ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ الْقِيَمَةِ لَا رَيْبَ  
 فِيهِ الَّذِينَ خَسِرُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ  
 فَهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ○

13 " To Him belongeth all  
 That dwelleth (or lurketh) <sup>845</sup>  
 In the Night and the Day  
 For He is the One  
 Who heareth and knoweth  
 All things " <sup>846</sup>

۱۳- وَلَهُ مَا سَكَنَ  
 فِي الْيَلِّ وَالنَّهَارِ  
 وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ○

14 Say " Shall I take  
 For my protector  
 Any other than God,  
 The Maker of the heavens  
 And the earth ?  
 And He it is that  
 Feedeth but is not fed " <sup>847</sup>  
 Say " Nay ' but I am  
 Commanded to be the first  
 Of those who bow  
 To God (in Islam),  
 And be not thou  
 Of the company of those  
 Who join gods with God "

۱۴- قُلْ أَغْتَرَّ اللّٰهُ أَتَّخِذُ وَلِيًّا  
 فَاَطِرَ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ  
 وَهُوَ يُطْعِمُهُ وَلَا يَطْعَمُهُ  
 قُلْ اِنِّیْ اُمِرْتُ اَنْ اَكُوْنَ اَوَّلَ  
 مَنْ اَسْلَمَ  
 وَلَا تَكُوْنَنَّ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِيْنَ ○

844 History, travel human experience all prove the Mercy of God and the law that without it those who reject Truth tend to lose their own souls and destroy themselves

845 *Sakana*—(1) to dwell (2) to rest to be still to stop (moving) to lurk, (3) to be quiescent as a letter which is not moved with a vowel

If we imagine Night and Day to be places and each to have (dwelling in them) things that are open and things that are concealed things that move and things that are still things that are sounded and things that are quiescent we get some idea of the imagery implied The mystery of Time (which seems more abstract than Space) is thus explained and illustrated by the idea of Place or Space which also is a notion and not a concrete thing But He Who has control of all these things is the one true God

846 Throughout this section we have a sort of implied dialogue of which one part is understood from the other part which is expressed In verse 11 we might have an imaginary objector saying Why go back to the past? The answer is Well travel through the world and see whether it is not true that virtue and godliness exalt a nation and the opposite are causes of ruin Both the past and the present prove this In verse 12 the objector may say But you speak of God's power? The man of God replies Yes but Mercy is God's own attribute and knowledge and wisdom beyond what man can conceive

847 *Feedeth but is not fed* true both literally and figuratively To God we owe the satisfaction of all needs but He is independent of all needs

15 Say "I would, if I  
Disobeyed my Lord,  
Indeed have fear  
Of the Penalty  
Of a Mighty Day

16 "On that day, if the Penalty  
Is averted from any,  
It is due to God's Mercy,  
And that would be (Salvation),  
The obvious fulfilment  
Of all desire <sup>848</sup>

17 "If God touch thee  
With affliction, none  
Can remove it but He,  
If He touch thee with happiness,  
He hath power over all things <sup>849</sup>

18 "He is the Irresistible, (watching)  
From above over His worshippers,  
And He is the Wise,  
Acquainted with all things "

19 Say "What thing is most  
Weighty in evidence?"  
Say "God is witness  
Between me and you,  
This Qurān hath been  
Revealed to me by inspiration,  
That I may warn you  
And all whom it reaches  
Can ye possibly bear witness  
That besides God there is  
Another God?" Say  
"Nay! I cannot bear witness!"  
Say "But in truth  
He is the One God,

١٥- قُلْ إِنِّي أَخَافُ  
إِنْ عَصَيْتُ  
رَبِّي عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ ۝

١٦- مَنْ يُصْرِفْ عَنْهُ يَوْمَئِذٍ  
فَقَدْ رَجِمَهُ  
وَذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْمُبِينُ ۝

١٧- وَإِنْ يَسْسِسْكَ اللَّهُ بِضُرٍّ فَلَا كَاشِفَ  
لَهُ إِلَّا هُوَ وَإِنْ يَسْسِسْكَ بِخَيْرٍ  
فَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ۝

١٨- وَهُوَ الْقَاهِرُ فَوْقَ عِبَادِهِ  
وَهُوَ الْحَكِيمُ الْخَبِيرُ ۝

١٩- قُلْ أَمَى شَيْءٍ أَكْبَرُ شَهَادَةً  
قُلْ اللَّهُ شَهِيدٌ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكُمْ  
وَأَوْحَى إِلَيَّ هَذَا الْقُرْآنُ  
لَأُنذِرَكُمْ بِهِ وَمَنْ بَلَغَ أَتَيْنَاكُمْ  
لَتَشْهَدُنَّ أَنَّ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهَةً أُخْرَى  
قُلْ لَا أَشْهَدُ  
قُلْ إِنَّمَا هُوَ إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ

848 We continue the implied dialogic suggested in n 846 In verse 14 the objector might say But we have other interests in life than religion and God No says the man of God My Creator is the one and only Power whose protection I seek, and I strive to be first in the race In verse 15 the objector suggests Enjoy the good things of this life it is short The answer is

The Hereafter is more real to me and promises the true fulfilment of all desire, happiness or affliction comes not from the fleeting pettingesses or illusions of this life but from the power and wisdom of God In verse 19 the objector makes his final splash What evidence is there for all this? The reply is I know it is true for God's voice is within me and my living Teacher awakens that voice, and there is the Book of Inspiration God is one and there is none other besides "

849 The vulgar worship false gods out of fear that they would harm them or hope that they would confer some benefit on them These false gods can do neither All power, all goodness is in the hands of the One True God All else is pretence or illusion

And I truly am innocent  
Of (your blasphemy of) joining  
Others with Him "

- 20 The People of the Book  
Know this as they know<sup>850</sup>  
Their own sons  
Those who have lost  
Their own souls  
Refuse therefore to believe

## SECTION 3

- 21 **W**ho doth more wrong  
Than he who inventeth  
A lie against God  
Or rejecteth His Signs ?  
But verily the wrong-doers  
Never shall prosper
22. One day shall We gather  
Them all together We  
Shall say to those  
Who ascribed partners (to Us)  
"Where are the partners  
Whom ye (invented  
And) talked about ? "
- 23 There will then be (left)  
No subterfuge for them<sup>851</sup>  
But to say "By God  
Our Lord, we were not  
Those who joined gods  
With God "
24. Behold ! how they lie  
Against their own souls !

وَأَشْفِي بَرِيءٌ مِّمَّا تُشْرِكُونَ ٥

٢٠- الَّذِينَ اتَّيْنَهُمُ الْكِتَابُ يَعْرِفُونَهُ  
كَمَا يَعْرِفُونَ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ الَّذِينَ خَسِرُوا  
أَنْفُسَهُمْ فَهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ٥

وَقَدْ لَعَنُوا بِالْحَقِّ - وَقَدْ لَعَنُوا بِالْحَقِّ

٢١- وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ افْتَرَى عَلَى اللَّهِ  
كَذِبًا أَوْ كَذَّبَ بِآيَاتِهِ  
إِنَّهُ لَا يَفْقَهُ الظَّالِمُونَ ٥

٢٢- وَيَوْمَ نَحْشُرُهُمْ جَمِيعًا  
ثُمَّ نَقُولُ لِلَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا  
أَيْنَ شُرَكَاءُكُمْ  
الَّذِينَ كُنْتُمْ تَزْعُمُونَ ٥

٢٣- ثُمَّ لَمْ تَكُنْ فَتَنْهُمْ  
إِلَّا أَنْ قَالُوا وَاللَّهُ رَبُّنَا  
مَا كُنَّا مُشْرِكِينَ ٥

٢٤- أَنْظِرْ كَيْفَ كَذَبُوا عَلَى أَنْفُسِهِمْ

850 Cf n 146 and n 151 In both passages the pronoun translated 'this' may mean 'him' and refer to Muhammad the Apostle of God, as some Commentators think

851 *It is* has various meanings, from the root idea of to try to test to tempt, "e.g. (1) a trial or temptation, as in n 102, (2) trouble tumult, oppression persecution, as in n 191, 193, 217, (3) discord as in n 7, (4) subterfuge, an answer that amounts to a sedition an excuse founded on a falsehood, as here Other shades of meaning will be noticed as they occur

Those who blasphemed God in imagining false gods will now see the vanity of their imaginations for themselves What answer can they give now ? In their perversity they will deny that they ever entertained the notion of false gods

But the (lie) which they  
Invented will leave them <sup>852</sup>  
In the lurch

- 25 Of them there are some  
Who (pretend to) listen to thee ,  
But We have thrown  
Veils on their hearts,  
So they understand it not, <sup>852 A</sup>  
And deafness in their ears ,  
If they saw every one  
Of the Signs, not they  
Will believe in them,  
In so much that  
When they come to thee,  
They (but) dispute with thee ,  
The Unbelievers say  
" These are nothing  
But tales of the ancients "
- 26 Others they keep away from it,  
And themselves they keep away ,  
But they only destroy  
Their own souls,  
And they perceived it not
- 27 If thou couldst but see  
When they are confronted  
With the Fire!  
They will say  
" Would that we were  
But sent back !  
Then would we not reject  
The Signs of our Lord,  
But would be amongst those  
Who believe ! "
- 28 Yea, in their own eyes  
Will become manifest  
What before they concealed  
But if they were returned,  
They would certainly relapse  
To the things they were forbidden,

وَضَلَّ عَنْهُمْ مَا كَانُوا يَفْتَرُونَ ۝

٢٥- وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ يَسْتَمِعُ إِلَيْكَ  
وَجَعَلْنَا عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ أَكِنَّةً  
أَنْ يَفْقَهُوهُ وَفِي آذَانِهِمْ وَقْرًا  
وَلَنْ يَكُونُوا عَلَى آيَةٍ  
لَّا يُؤْمِنُوا بِهَا  
حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءُوكَ يُجَادِلُونَكَ  
يَقُولُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا

إِنْ هَذَا إِلَّا آسَاطِيرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ ۝

٢٦- وَهُمْ يَنْهَوْنَ عَنْهُ وَيَنْتَوْنَ عَنْهُ  
وَأِنْ يُهْلِكُونَ

إِلَّا أَنْفُسَهُمْ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ ۝

٢٧- وَلَوْ تَرَىٰ إِذْ وَقَفُوا عَلَى النَّارِ

فَقَالُوا يَلَيْتَنَا مُرَدُّ

وَلَا تَكْذِبُ

بِآيَاتِ رَبِّنَا

وَنَكُونُ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۝

٢٨- بَلْ بَدَأَهُم مَّا كَانُوا يُخْفُونَ مِنْ

قَبْلُ

وَلَوْ رُدُّوا لَعَادُوا لِمَا نُهُوا عَنْهُ

852 The lies which they used to tell have now wandered from the channels which they used to occupy and left the liars in the lurch In denying the indubitable fact that they took false gods, they admit the falsity of their notions and thus are practically convicted out of their own mouths

For they are indeed liars <sup>853</sup>

- 29 And they (sometimes) say  
 " There is nothing except  
 Our life on this earth,  
 And never shall we be  
 Raised up again "

- 30 If thou couldst but see  
 When they are confronted  
 With their Lord!  
 He will say  
 " Is not this the truth ? "  
 They will say  
 " Yea, by our Lord ! "  
 He will say  
 " Taste ye then the Penalty,  
 Because ye rejected Faith "

وَاللَّهُمَّ لَكِنَّا بُونَ

٢٩- وَقَالُوا إِن هِيَ إِلَّا حَيَاتُنَا الدُّنْيَا  
 وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمَبْعُوثِينَ

٣٠- وَلَوْ تَرَى إِذْ وَقَفُوا عَلَى رَبِّهِمْ  
 قَالَ أَلَيْسَ هَذَا بِالْحَقِّ  
 قَالُوا بَلَى وَرَبِّنَا  
 قَالَ فَذُوقُوا الْعَذَابَ  
 بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْفُرُونَ

C 77 —The life of this world is but empty  
 (vi 31 60) What is serious is the life hereafter  
 The teacher of God's truth is not baulked  
 By frivolous objections or insults  
 Or persecution The wicked will be  
 Cut off to the last remnant God's wisdom  
 Pervades the whole of His creation,  
 And in His hands are the keys of the Unseen,  
 And the secrets of all that we see

#### SECTION 4

- 31 Most indeed are they  
 Who treat it as a falsehood  
 That they must meet God,—  
 Until on a sudden  
 The hour is on them,  
 And they say " Ah! woe  
 Unto us that we took  
 No thought of it ",  
 For they bear their burdens <sup>854</sup>  
 On their backs,

٣١- قَدْ خَسِرَ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِلِقَاءِ اللَّهِ  
 حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَتْهُمْ السَّاعَةُ بَغْتَةً  
 قَالُوا بِحَسْرَتِنَا عَلَىٰ مَا كُنَّا نَفِيهَا  
 وَهُمْ بِحَمُولٍ أَوْزَارُهُمْ عَلَىٰ  
 ظُهُورِهِمْ

853 Their falsity was not due to want of knowledge but to perversity and selfishness In their heart was a disease (u 10) therefore neither their understanding nor their ears nor their eyes do their proper work They twist what they see hear or are taught and go deeper and deeper into the mire The deceptions which they used to practise on other people will before the Seat of Judgment become clear in their own eyes

854 Grievous is the burden of sins which the wicked will bear on their backs when they become conscious of them Some Commentators personify Sins as ugly Demons riding on the backs of men while the men's Good Deeds become the strong and patient mounts which will carry the men on their backs If the Good Deeds are few and the Sins many the man and his Good Deeds will be crushed under the load of the Evil which they carry

And are they not evil,—  
The burdens that they bear?

- 32 What is the life of this world  
But play and amusement? <sup>855</sup>  
But best is the Home  
In the Hereafter, for those  
Who are righteous  
Will ye not understand?

- 33 **W**e know indeed the grief  
Which their words do cause thee  
It is not thee they reject  
It is the Signs of God,  
Which the wicked contemn

34. Rejected were the Apostles  
Before thee with patience  
And constancy they bore  
Their rejection and their wrongs,  
Until Our aid did reach  
Them there is none  
That can alter the Words  
(And Decrees) of God  
Already hast thou received  
Some account of those Apostles

- 35 If their spurning is hard  
On thy mind, and if  
Thou wert able to seek  
A tunnel in the ground  
Or a ladder to the skies  
And bring them a Sign, — <sup>856</sup>  
(What good?) If it were  
God's Will, He could  
Gather them together  
Unto true guidance

أَلَا سَاءَ مَا يَحْكُمُونَ

٣٢- وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا لَعِبٌ وَلَهْوٌ  
وَلَكِنَّ أَجْرَ الْآخِرَةِ خَيْرٌ  
لِّلَّذِينَ يَتَّقُونَ أَفَلَا تَعْلَمُونَ

٣٣- قَدْ نَعْلَمُ إِنَّكَ لَمُخْزٍ لِّذِي يَقُولُونَ  
فَإِنَّهُمْ لَا يُكَذِّبُونَكَ  
وَلَكِنَّ الظَّالِمِينَ بَالِيتِ اللَّهِ بِتَحْدُوثِهِ

٣٤- وَلَقَدْ كَذَّبْتَ رَسُولٌ مِّن قَبْلِكَ  
فَصَبَرُوا عَلَىٰ مَا كَذَّبُوا  
وَأَوْدُوا حَتَّىٰ أَنهَمُ نَصْرًا  
وَلَا مُدْبِلَ لِكَلِمَاتِ اللَّهِ  
وَلَقَدْ جَاءَكَ مِنْ نَّبَايَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ

٣٥- وَإِنْ كَانَ كَرُّ عَلَيْكَ إِعْرَاصُهُمْ  
فَإِنْ اسْتَطَعْتَ أَنْ تَنْتَجِيَ نَقْعًا فِي  
الْأَرْضِ أَوْ سُلَكًا فِي السَّمَاءِ  
فَتَأْتِيَهُمْ بِآيَةٍ  
وَلَوْ سَاءَ اللَّهُ لَحَمَعَهُمْ عَلَى الْهُدَى

855 Play and amusement are for preparing our minds for the serious things of life in themselves they are not serious So this life is a preparation for the Eternal Home to which we are going which is far more important than the ephemeral pleasures which may possibly seduce us in this life

856 There were many Signs of a divine mission in the Apostle's life and in the Message which he delivered If these did not convince the Unbelievers was it not vain to seek a miraculous Sign from the bowels of the earth or by a visible ascent to the skies? If in the Apostle's eagerness to get all to accept his Message he was hurt at their callousness active opposition and persecution of him he is told that a full knowledge of the working of God's Plan would convince him that impatience was misplaced This was in the days of persecution before the Hijrat The history in Medina and after shows how God's truth was ultimately and triumphantly vindicated Who among the sincere devotees of Muhammad can fail to read vi 33 35 without tears in his eyes?

So be not thou  
Amongst those who are swayed  
By ignorance (and impatience) !

- 36 Those who listen (in truth),<sup>857</sup>  
Be sure, will accept  
As to the dead, God will  
Raise them up, then will they  
Be turned unto Him

- 37 They say " Why is not  
A Sign sent down  
To him from his Lord ? "  
Say " God hath certainly  
Power to send down a Sign  
But most of them  
Understand not " <sup>858</sup>

- 38 There is not an animal  
(That lives) on the earth,  
Nor a being that flies  
On its wings, but (forms  
Part of) communities like you <sup>859</sup>  
Nothing have we omitted  
From the Book, and they (all)  
Shall be gathered to their Lord  
In the end

- 39 Those who reject our Signs  
Are deaf and dumb, — <sup>860</sup>

فَلَا تَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخٰهِلِيْنَ ۝

۳۶- اٰتَمَّا يَسْتَجِیْبُ الَّذِیْنَ یَسْمَعُوْنَ  
وَالْمَوْتٰی یَبْعَثُهُمُ اللّٰهُ  
ثُمَّ اِلَیْهِ یُرْجَعُوْنَ ۝

۳۷- وَقَالُوا لَوْلَا نُزِّلَ عَلَیْهِ اٰیَةٌ  
مِّنْ رَّبِّهِ ۚ

قُلْ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ قَادِرٌ عَلٰۤی اَنْ یُّنْزِلَ اٰیَةً  
وَ لٰكِنْ اَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا یَعْلَمُوْنَ ۝

۳۸- وَمَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ فِی الْاَرْضِ  
وَلَا طَیْرِ یَطِیْرُ بِجَنَاحِیْهِ  
اِلَّا اُمَّةٌ اَمْثَلُكُمْ ۚ

مَا فَزَّطْنَا فِی الْكِتٰبِ مِنْ شَیْءٍ  
ثُمَّ اِلٰی رَبِّهِمْ یُحْشَرُوْنَ ۝

۳۹- وَالَّذِیْنَ كَذَّبُوْا بِاٰیٰتِنَا صُمُّ وَ بُكْمٌ

۱- قد عمل  
۲- قد عمل

857 There is a double meaning here (1) If people listen to truth sincerely and earnestly they must believe even if the spiritual faculty is dead God will by His grace revive it and they will come to Him if they really try earnestly to understand (2) The sincere will believe but those whose hearts are dead will not listen yet they cannot escape being brought to the Judgment Seat before him

858 Signs are all around them but they do not understand If they want a particular Sign to suit their gross ignorance they will not be humoured for they can always pick holes in anything that descends to their level

859 Animals living on the earth include those living in the water—fishes reptiles crustaceans insects as well as four footed beasts Life on the wing is separately mentioned 'Tair which is ordinarily translated as 'bird' is anything that flies including mammals like bats In our pride we may exclude animals from our purview but they all live a life social and individual like ourselves and all life is subject to the Plan and Will of God In vi 59 we are told that not a leaf falls but by His Will and things dry and green are recorded in His Book In other words they all obey His archetypal Plan the Book which is also mentioned here They are all answerable in their several degrees to His Plan (shall be gathered to their Lord in the end) This is not Pantheism it is ascribing all life activity and existence to the Will and Plan of God

860 The limited free will of man makes a little difference If he sees the Signs but shuts his ears to the true Message and refuses (like a dumb thing) to speak out the Message which all Nature proclaims then according to the Plan (of his limited free will) he must suffer and wander, just as, in the opposite case he will receive grace and salvation

In the midst of darkness  
Profound whom He willeth,  
He leaveth to wander  
Whom He willeth, He placeth  
On the Way that is Straight

- 40 Say "Think ye to yourselves,  
If there come upon you  
The Wrath of God,  
Or the Hour (that ye dread),  
Would ye then call upon  
Other than God?—  
(Reply) if ye are truthful!

- 41 "Nay,—On Him would ye  
Call, and if it be  
His Will, He would remove  
(The distress) which occasioned  
Your call upon Him,  
And ye would forget  
(The false gods) which ye  
Join with Him!"

#### SECTION 5

42. Before thee We sent  
(Apostles) to many nations,  
And We afflicted the nations  
With suffering and adversity,  
That they might learn humility

43. When the suffering reached  
Them from Us, why then  
Did they not learn humility?<sup>861</sup>  
On the contrary their hearts  
Became hardened, and Satan  
Made their (sinful) acts  
Seem alluring to them

44. But when they forgot  
The Message they had received,

فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ  
مَنْ يَشَاءُ اللَّهُ يُضِلَّهُ وَمَنْ يَشَاءُ  
يَجْعَلْهُ عَلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ

٣٠- قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ  
إِنْ أَتَاكُمْ عَذَابُ اللَّهِ  
أَوْ أَتَاكُمْ السَّاعَةُ أَغَيْرَ اللَّهِ تَدْعُونَ  
إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ

٣١- بَلْ إِيَّاهُ تَدْعُونَ  
فِي كُشْفٍ مَا تَدْعُونَ إِلَيْهِ  
إِنْ شَاءَ  
وَتَكْفُرُونَ مَا تَنْشُرُونَ

٣٢- وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَى أُمَمٍ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ  
فَلَخَذْنَاهُمْ بِالْبَأْسَاءِ وَالضَّرَاءِ  
لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَضَرَّعُونَ

٣٣- فَلَوْلَا إِذْ جَاءَهُمْ بَأْسُنَا  
تَضَرَّعُوا وَلَكِنْ قَسَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ  
وَزَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ  
مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

٣٤- فَلَمَّا نَسُوا مَا ذُكِّرُوا بِهِ

861 Sorrow and suffering may (if we take them rightly) turn out to be the best gifts of God to us, According to the Psalms (xciv 12), "Blessed is the man whom Thou chastenest O Lord! Through suffering we learn humility the antidote to many vices and the fountain of many virtues But if we take them the wrong way, we grumble and complain, we become faint hearted, and Satan gets his opportunity to exploit us by putting forward the alluring pleasures of his Vanity Fair



We opened to them the gates  
Of all (good) things, <sup>862</sup>  
Until, in the midst  
Of their enjoyment  
Of our gifts,  
On a sudden, We called  
Them to account, when lo!  
They were plunged in despair!

- 45 Of the wrong-doers the last  
Remnant shall be cut off  
Praise be to God,  
The Cherisher of the Worlds <sup>863</sup>

- 46 Say "Think ye, if God  
Took away your hearing  
And your sight, and sealed up <sup>864</sup>  
Your hearts, who—a god  
Other than God—could  
Restore them to you?"  
See how We explain  
The Signs by various (symbols),  
Yet they turn aside

- 47 Say "Think ye, if  
The Punishment of God  
Comes to you,  
Whether suddenly or openly, <sup>865</sup>  
Will any be destroyed  
Except those who do wrong?"

- 48 We send the apostles  
Only to give good news <sup>866</sup>

فَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِمُ أَبْوَابَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ ط  
حَتَّىٰ إِذَا فَرِحُوا بِمَا أُوتُوا  
أَخَذْنَاهُمْ بِعَتَّةٍ  
فَإِذَا هُمْ مُبْلِسُونَ ○

٢٥- فَقَطَّعَ دَابِرَ الْقَوْمِ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا  
وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ○

٢٦- قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ إِنْ أَخَذَ اللَّهُ سَمْعَكُمْ  
وَأَبْصَارَكُمْ وَخَتَمَ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِكُمْ  
مَنْ إِلَهٌ غَيْرُ اللَّهِ يَأْتِيكُمْ بِهِ ط  
أَنْظُرْ كَيْفَ نَصَرَفُ الْآيَاتِ  
ثُمَّ هُمْ يَصْدِفُونَ ○

٢٧- قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ إِنْ أَتَاكُمْ عَذَابُ اللَّهِ  
بَعَثَهُ أَزْجَرَ  
هَلْ يُهْلِكُ إِلَّا الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ ○

٢٨- وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَّا مُبَشِّرِينَ

862 Learning the inner truth of ourselves and the world presupposes a certain advanced stage of sensitiveness and spiritual development. There is a shallower stage at which prosperity and the good things of life may teach us sympathy and goodness and cheerfulness like that of Mr. Cheerhyles in Dickens. In such cases the Message takes root. But there is another type of character which is puffed up in prosperity. For them prosperity is a trial or even a punishment from the higher point of view. They go deeper and deeper into sin until they are pulled up of a sudden, and then instead of being contrite they merely become desperate.

863 God's punishment of wrong doers is a measure of justice to protect the true and righteous from their depredations and maintain His righteous decrees. It is an aspect of His character which is emphasized by the epithet "Cherisher of the Worlds."

864 (f 11 7 and n)

865 *Suddenly*—without warning. *Openly*—with many warnings even to the sinners though they heed them not. As to those who understand and read the signs of God, they could always tell that all wrong doing must eventually have its punishment. But it will affect the wrong doers, not the righteous. It is justice, not revenge.

866 The Apostles are not sent to cancel man's limited free will. They are sent to preach and teach,—to preach hope to the repentant ('good news'), and to warn the rebellious of the Wrath to come.

And to warn so those  
Who believe and mend  
(Their lives), — upon them  
Shall be no fear,  
Nor shall they grieve

- 49 But those who reject  
Our Signs, — them  
Shall our punishment touch,  
For that they ceased not  
From transgressing

- 50 Say "I tell you not  
That with me  
Are the Treasures of God,<sup>867</sup>  
Nor do I know  
What is hidden,  
Nor do I tell you I am  
An angel I but follow  
What is revealed to me"  
Say "Can the blind  
Be held equal to the seeing?"<sup>868</sup>  
Will ye then consider not?

#### SECTION 6

- 51 Give the warning to those<sup>869</sup>  
In whose (hearts) is the fear  
That they will be brought  
(To Judgment) before their Lord  
Except for Him  
They will have no protector  
Nor intercessor  
That they may guard  
(Against evil)

وَمُنْذِرِينَ ۖ فَمَنْ أَمِنَ وَأَصْلَحَ  
فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ  
وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ○

٢٩- وَالَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا  
يَمَسُّهُمُ الْعَذَابُ  
بِمَا كَانُوا يَفْسُقُونَ ○

٥٠- قُلْ لَا أَقُولُ لَكُمْ عِنْدِيَ خَزَائِنُ  
اللَّهِ وَلَا أَعْلَمُ الْغَيْبِ  
وَلَا أَقُولُ لَكُمْ إِنِّي مَلَكٌ  
إِنْ أَتَيْتُمْ إِلَّا مَا يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ  
قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الْأَعْمَىٰ وَالْبَصِيرُ  
أَفَلَا تَتَفَكَّرُونَ ۚ

٥١- وَأَنْذِرْ بِهِ الَّذِينَ يَخَافُونَ  
أَنْ يُخْسِرُوا إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ  
لَيْسَ لَهُمْ مِنْ دُونِهِ  
وَلِيٌّ وَلَا شَفِيعٌ  
لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ ○

867 Literally it might mean that the men of God are not like vulgar soothsayers who pretend to reveal hidden treasures or peer into the future or claim to be something of a different nature from men. But the meaning is wider: they deal out God's great treasures of truth, but the treasures are not theirs but God's; they have greater insight into the higher things, but that insight is not due to their own wisdom but to God's inspiration; they are of the same flesh and blood with us and the sublimity of their words and teaching arises through God's grace—to them and to those who hear them.

868 Therefore compare not the men of God (the seeing) with ordinary men (the blind). The men of God, although they be but men, have the higher light with them; therefore do not exact of them petty ephemeral services. Though they are men, they are not as other men and are entitled to reverence.

869 There are some men—sinners—who yet believe in Judgment: let them be warned of their personal responsibility to guard against evil; let them not rely upon protectors or intercessors before God; their sins can only be forgiven by God's own Mercy.

52 Send not away those  
Who call on their Lord  
Morning and evening,  
Seeking His Face <sup>870</sup>  
Naught have they to gain  
From thee, and naught  
Hast thou to gain from them, <sup>871</sup>  
That thou shouldst turn  
Them away, and thus be  
(One) of the unjust

٥٢- وَلَا تَطْرُدِ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ  
بِالْعَدَاوَةِ وَالْعَشْيِ يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَهُ  
مَا عَلَيْكَ مِنْ حِسَابِهِمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ  
وَمَا مِنْ حِسَابِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ  
فَتَطْرُدَهُمْ فَتَكُونَ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ ○

53 Thus did We try  
Some of them by comparison <sup>872</sup>  
With others, that they  
Should say "Is it these  
Then that God hath  
Favoured from amongst us? "  
Doth not God know best  
Those who are grateful?

٥٣- وَكَذَلِكَ فَتَنَّا بَعْضَهُمْ بِبَعْضٍ  
لِيَقُولُوا أَهَؤُلَاءِ مَنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ  
مِنْ بَيْنِنَا  
أَلَيْسَ اللَّهُ بِأَعْلَمَ بِالشَّاكِرِينَ ○

54 When those come to thee  
Who believe in Our Signs,  
Say "Peace be on you <sup>873</sup>  
Your Lord hath inscribed  
For Himself (the rule <sup>874</sup>  
Of) Mercy verily,  
If any of you did evil  
In ignorance, and thereafter

٥٤- وَإِذَا جَاءَكَ الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِآيَاتِنَا  
فَقُلْ سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ  
كَتَبَ رَبُّكُمْ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ الرَّحْمَةَ  
أَنَّهُ مَنْ عَمِلَ مِنْكُمْ سُوءًا بِجَهَالَةٍ ثُمَّ

870 *Face wajh* see ii 112 and ii 114 Face is used for God's Grace or Presence, the highest aim of spiritual aspiration

871 Some of the rich and influential Quraish thought it beneath their dignity to listen to Muhammad's teaching in company with the lowly disciples who were gathered round him. But he refused to send away these lowly disciples who were sincere seekers after God. From a worldly point of view they had nothing to gain from Muhammad as he was himself poor and he had nothing to gain from them as they had no influence. But that was no reason for turning them away indeed their true sincerity entitled them to precedence over worldly men in the kingdom of God whose justice was vindicated in Muhammad's daily life in this as in other things

872 Pursue the argument of the last note. The influential people who were not given precedence over the poor and humble but sincere disciples were on their trial as to their spiritual insight. Their temptation was to say (and they said it in scorn) "We are much greater than they has God then selected these lowly people for His teaching?" But that was so. And God knew best those who were grateful to Him for His guidance

873 The humble who had sincere faith were not only not sent away to humour the wealthy they were honoured and were given a special salutation which has become the characteristic salutation in Islam "Peace be on you" —the word peace *salām* having special affinity with the word '*Islām*'. In words they are given the salutation in life they are promised Mercy by the special grace of God.

874 Cf vi 12

Repented, and amended  
(His conduct), lo! He is  
Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful

- 5 } Thus do We explain  
The Signs in detail  
That the way of the sinners  
May be shown up <sup>876</sup>

### SECTION 7

- 56 Say <sup>876</sup> "I am forbidden  
To worship those—others  
Than God—whom ye  
Call upon" Say "I will  
Not follow your vain desires  
If I did, I would stray  
From the path, and be not  
Of the company of those  
Who receive guidance "
- 57 Say "For me, I have  
An obvious Sign from my Lord,  
But ye reject it What ye <sup>877</sup>  
Would see hastened, is not  
In my power The Command  
Rests with none but God  
He declares the Truth,  
And He is the best of judges "
- 58 Say "If what ye would see  
Hastened were in my power,  
The matter would be settled  
At once between you and me <sup>878</sup>

قَاتِبٌ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ وَأَصْلَحَ  
فَأَنَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

٥٥- وَكَذَلِكَ نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ  
وَلِيَسْتَنبِذُوا سَبِيلَ الْمُجْرِمِينَ ۝

٥٦- قُلْ إِنِّي نُهَيْتُ أَنْ أَعْبُدَ  
الَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ  
قُلْ لَا أَتَّبِعُ أَهْوَاءَكُمْ  
قَدْ ضَلَلْتُ إِذًا  
وَمَا أَنَا مِنَ الْمُهْتَدِينَ ۝

٥٧- قُلْ إِنِّي عَلَىٰ بَيِّنَةٍ مِنْ رَبِّي  
وَكَذَّبْتُمْ بِهِ مَا عِنْدِي مَا تَسْتَعْجِلُونَ  
بِهِ إِنِ الْحُكْمُ إِلَّا لِلَّهِ  
يَقْضِي الْحَقَّ وَهُوَ خَيْرُ الْفَاصِلِينَ ۝

٥٨- قُلْ لَوْ أَنَّ عِنْدِي مَا تَسْتَعْجِلُونَ  
بِهِ لَقَضَيْتُ الْأَمْرَ بَيْنَكُمْ

876 If the way of the sinners (in jealousy and worldly pride) is shown up and details are given how to honour the truly sincere it forms the best illustration of the teaching of God

876 There are a number of arguments now put forward against the Meccans who refused to believe in God's Message. Each argument is introduced with the word Say. Here are the first four (1) I have received Light and will follow it (2) I prefer my Light to your vain desires, (3) your challenge— if there is a God, why does He not finish the blasphemers at once? —it is not for me to take up, punishment rests with God, (4) if it rested with me, it would be for me to take up your challenge. All I know is that God is not unacquainted with the existence of folly and wickedness and many other things besides that no mortal can know, you can see little glimpses of His Plan, and you can be sure that He will not be tardy in calling you to account.

877 What ye would see hastened what ye deniers of God are so impatient about, the punishment which ye mockingly say does not come to you Cf. XIII 6

878 The Messenger of God is not here to settle scores with the wicked. It is not a matter between them and him. It is a matter between them and God, he is only a Warner against sin, and a declarer of the gospel of salvation.

But God knoweth best  
Those who do wrong "

- 59 With Him are the keys<sup>879</sup>  
Of the Unseen, the treasures  
That none knoweth but He  
He knoweth whatever there is  
On the earth and in the sea  
Not a leaf doth fall  
But with His knowledge  
There is not a grain  
In the darkness (or depths)  
Of the earth, nor anything  
Fresh or dry (green or withered),  
But is (inscribed) in a Record<sup>880</sup>  
Clear (to those who can read)

- 60 It is He Who doth take  
Your souls by night,  
And hath knowledge of all  
That ye have done by day  
By day doth He raise  
You up again, that a term  
Appointed be fulfilled,  
In the end unto Him  
Will be your return,<sup>881</sup>  
Then will He show you  
The truth of all  
That ye did

وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِالظَّالِمِينَ ٥٩

٥٩- وَعِنْدَهُ مَفَاتِحُ الْغَيْبِ  
لَا يَعْلَمُهَا إِلَّا هُوَ  
وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ  
وَمَا تَسْقُطُ مِنْ وَرَقَةٍ إِلَّا يَعْلَمُهَا  
وَلَا حَبَّةٌ فِي ظِلْمٍ الْأَرْضِ  
وَلَا رَطْبٌ وَلَا يَابِسٌ  
إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مُبِينٍ ٥٩

٦٠- وَهُوَ الَّذِي يَتَوَفَّاكُم بِاللَّيْلِ  
وَيَعْلَمُ مَا جَرَحْتُم بِالنَّهَارِ  
ثُمَّ يَبْعَثُكُمْ فِيهِ لِبُقْطَى أَجَلٍ مُسَمًّى  
ثُمَّ إِلَيْهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ  
ثُمَّ يُنَبِّئُكُمْ  
بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ٦٠

C 78 —God's loving care doth encompass  
(vi 61 82) Us round throughout life,  
And deliver us from dangers  
By land and sea He is the only  
Protector how can we then

879 *Mafatih* Plural of either *miftah*=a key or *maftah*=a treasure Both meanings are implied and I have accordingly put both in my translation

880 This is the mystic Record the archetypal Plan the Lternal Law according to which everything seen and unseen is ordered and regulated There is much mystic doctrine here explained by beautiful metaphors and illustrations The simplest things in Nature are subject to His Law The fresh and the withered, the living and the lifeless—nothing is outside the Plan of His Creation

881 As the rest of His Creation is subject to His Law and Plan, so is man's life in every particular and at every moment, awake or asleep The mystery of Sleep—the twin brother of death—is called the taking of our soul by Him with the record of all we have done in our waking moments and this record sometimes appears to us in confused glimpses in dreams By day we awaken again to our activities and so it goes on until we fulfil the term of our life appointed for this earth Then comes the other Sleep (death), with the longer record of our Day (Life), and then, in the end comes the Resurrection and Judgment, at which we see everything clearly and not as in dreams, for that is the final Reality

Forget Him or run after things  
That are mere creatures of His,  
And shall perish, while He  
Is the Eternal God, adored  
By Abraham and all the prophets ?

## SECTION 8

- 61 **He** is the Irresistible, (watching)  
From above over His worshippers,  
And He sets guardians<sup>882</sup>  
Over you At length,  
When death approaches  
One of you, Our angels<sup>883</sup>  
Take his soul, and they  
Never fail in their duty

٧١- وَهُوَ الْقَاهِرُ فَوْقَ عِبَادِهِ  
وَيُرْسِلُ عَلَيْكُمْ حَفَظَةً  
حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَ أَحَدَكُمُ الْمَوْتُ  
تَوَفَّتْهُ رُسُلُنَا وَهُمْ لَا يُفَرِّطُونَ ۝

- 62 Then are men returned  
Unto God, their Protector,  
The (only) Reality<sup>884</sup>  
Is not His the Command ?  
And He is the Swiftest  
In taking account

٧٢- ثُمَّ رُدُّوْا إِلَى اللَّهِ مَوْلَاهُمُ الْحَقُّ  
إِلَّا لَهُ الْحُكْمُ  
وَهُوَ أَسْرَعُ الْحَسِبِينَ ۝

- 63 **Say**<sup>885</sup> " Who is it  
That delivereth you  
From the dark recesses<sup>886</sup>  
Of land and sea,  
When ye call upon Him  
In meekness

٧٣- قُلْ مَنْ يُنَجِّيكُمْ  
مِّنْ ظُلُمَاتِ الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ  
تَدْعُونَهُ تَضَرُّعًا

882 *Guardians* most Commentators understand this to mean Guardian angels The idea of guardianship is expressed in a general term God watches over us and guards us and provides all kinds of agencies material moral and spiritual to help our growth and development keep us from harm and bring us nearer to our Destiny

883 *Angels* the word used is *rusul* the Sent Ones —the same word as for him in Apostles and Messengers sent by God to teach mankind The agents who come to take our souls at death are accurate in the performance of their duty They come neither before nor after their appointed time nor do they do it in any manner other than that fixed by the Command of God

884 *The only Reality al Haqq* the Truth the only True One The point is that our illusions of the life of this lower world now vanish when we are rendered back to God from Whom we came And now we find that so far from the results of our actions being delayed they follow more swiftly than we can express in terms of Time Here is the answer to the taunt of those who were impatient of the working of God's Plan (vi 57-58)

885 In continuation of the four heads of argument referred to in n 876 we have three more heads here in vi 63-65 (5) your calling upon Him in times of danger shows that in the depths of your hearts you feel His need, (6) God's Providence saves you and yet you ungratefully run after false gods, (7) it is not only physical calamities that you have to fear your mutual discords and vengeance are even more destructive and only faith in God can save you from them

886 *Zulumāt* dark recesses, terrible lurking dangers, as in deserts or mountains, or forests, or seas

And silent terror <sup>887</sup>  
 'If He only delivers us  
 From these (dangers),  
 (We vow) we shall truly  
 Show our gratitude' ? "

64 Say "It is God  
 That delivereth you  
 From these and all (other)  
 Distresses and yet  
 Ye run after false gods !"

65 Say "He hath power  
 To send calamities <sup>888</sup>  
 On you, from above  
 And below, or to cover  
 You with confusion  
 In party strife,  
 Giving you a taste  
 Of mutual vengeance—  
 Each from the other "  
 See how We explain  
 The Signs by various (symbols) , <sup>889</sup>  
 That they may understand

66 But thy people reject  
 This, though it is  
 The Truth Say "Not mine  
 Is the responsibility  
 For arranging your affairs , <sup>890</sup>

67. For every Message  
 Is a limit of time,  
 And soon shall ye  
 Know it "

وْ خُفْيَةً  
 لِّئِنْ أُنْجَيْنَا مِنْ هَٰذَا  
 لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الشَّاكِرِينَ ○

٦٣- قُلِ اللَّهُ يُنَجِّيكُمْ  
 مِنْهَا وَمِنْ كُلِّ كَرْبٍ  
 ثُمَّ أَنْتُمْ تُشْرِكُونَ ○

٦٥- قُلْ هُوَ الْقَادِرُ عَلَىٰ أَنْ يَبْعَثَ  
 عَلَيْكُمْ عَذَابًا مِنْ فَوْقِكُمْ  
 أَوْ مِنْ تَحْتِ أَرْجُلِكُمْ  
 أَوْ يَلْبِسَكُمْ شِيْعًا وَيُذِيقَ بَعْضَكُمْ  
 بَأْسَ بَعْضٍ ۚ انْظُرْ كَيْفَ نُصَرِّفُ  
 الْآيَاتِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَفْقَهُونَ ○

٦٦- وَكَذَّبَ بِهِ قَوْمُكَ وَهُوَ الْحَقُّ  
 قُلْ لَنْسُتَ عَلَيْكُمْ بَوَكِيلٌ ○

٦٧- لِكُلِّ نَبِيٍّ مُسْتَقَرٌّ  
 وَسَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ ○

887 There are two readings but they both ultimately yield the same meaning (1) *Khufyatan* silently secretly from the depth of your inner heart suggesting unspeakable terror (2) *Khifatan* out of terror or fear or reverence as in vii 205

888 *Calamities from above and below* such as storms and blizzards torrential rain etc , or earthquakes floods, landslides, etc

889 Cf vi 46, where this refrain commences the argument now drawing to a close

890 At the date of this revelation the Apostle's people had as a body not only rejected God's truth, but were persecuting it The Apostle's duty was to deliver his Message which he did He was not responsible for their conduct But he told them plainly that all warnings from God had their time limit as they would soon find out And they did find out within a very few years For the leaders of the resistance came to an evil end, and their whole system of fraud and selfishness was destroyed to make room for the purer Faith of Islam Apart from that particular application, there is the more general application for the present time and for all time

68 **W**hen thou seest men  
Engaged in vain discourse  
About Our Signs, turn  
Away from them unless<sup>891</sup>  
They turn to a different  
Theme If Satan ever  
Makes thee forget, then  
After recollection, sit not  
Thou in the company  
Of the ungodly

69 On their account  
No responsibility  
Falls on the righteous,<sup>892</sup>  
But (their duty)  
Is to remind them,  
That they may (learn  
To) fear God

70 Leave alone those  
Who take their religion  
To be mere play  
And amusement,<sup>893</sup>  
And are deceived  
By the life of this world  
But proclaim (to them)  
This (truth) that every soul  
Delivers itself to ruin  
By its own acts<sup>894</sup>  
It will find for itself  
No protector or intercessor  
Except God if it offered  
Every ransom, (or  
Reparation), none  
Will be accepted such is  
(The end of) those who  
Deliver themselves to ruin  
By their own acts  
They will have for drink  
(Only) boiling water,

٦٨- وَإِذَا رَأَيْتَ الَّذِينَ يَخُوضُونَ  
فِي آيَاتِنَا فَأَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ حَتَّى يَخُوضُوا  
فِي حَدِيثٍ غَيْرِهِ ۚ وَإِمَّا يُنسِيَنَّكَ  
الشَّيْطَانُ فَلَا تَقْعُدْ بَعْدَ الذِّكْرِ  
مَعَ الْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ ○

٦٩- وَمَا عَلَى الدِّينِ يَتَّقُونَ مِنْ  
حِسَابِهِمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ  
وَلَكِنْ ذَكِّرْ  
لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ ○

٧٠- وَذَرِ الَّذِينَ  
اتَّخَذُوا دِينَهُمْ لُعُفًا وَلَهُوَ  
وَعَثْرَتُهُمْ الدُّنْيَا  
وَذِكْرُ رَبٍّ أَنْ تُنْسَلَ نَفْسٌ بِمَا  
كَسَبَتْ ۖ  
لَيْسَ لَهَا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ  
وَلِيٌّ وَلَا سَعِيَةٌ  
وَإِنْ تَعْدِلْ كُلُّ عَدْلٍ لَا يُؤْخَذُ  
مِنْهَا ۚ أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ أُنْسِلُوا بِمَا كَسَبُوا  
لَهُمْ شَرَابٌ مِنْ حَمِيمٍ

891 Cf iv 140 If in any gathering truth is ridiculed we must not sit in such company If we find ourselves in it as soon as we realise it we must show our disapproval by leaving

892 Evil to him who evil thinks or evil does Every man is responsible for his own conduct But the righteous have two duties (1) to protect themselves from infection and (2) to proclaim God's truth for even in the most unlikely circumstances it is possible that it may have some effect

893 Cf vi 32 where we are told that the life of this world is mere play and amusement and Religion and the Hereafter are the serious things that require our attention Worldly people reverse this because they are deceived by the allurements of this life But their own acts will find them out

894 We must never forget our own personal responsibility for all we do or deceive ourselves by the illusion of vicarious atonement



And for punishment,  
One most grievous  
For they persisted  
In rejecting God

## SECTION 9

- 71 Say <sup>895</sup> " Shall we indeed  
Call on others besides God,—  
Things that can do us  
Neither good nor harm,—  
And turn on our heels  
After receiving guidance  
From God ?—like one  
Whom the evil ones  
Have made into a fool,  
Wandering bewildered  
Through the earth, his friends  
Calling 'Come to us',  
(Vainly) guiding him to the Path "

Say " God's guidance  
Is the (only) guidance,  
And we have been directed  
To submit ourselves  
To the Lord of the worlds ,—

- 72 "To establish regular prayers  
And to fear God  
For it is to Him  
That we shall be  
Gathered together "

- 73 It is He Who created  
The heavens and the earth  
In true (proportions) <sup>896</sup>  
The day He saith, "Be,"

وَعَذَابُ الْيَمِّ  
يَمَّا كَانُوا يَكْفُرُونَ ۝

۱- قُلْ أَدْعُوا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ  
مَا لَا يَنْفَعُنَا  
وَلَا يَضُرُّنَا  
وَنُرْثُ عَلَىٰ أَعْقَابِنَا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَيْنَا اللَّهَ  
كَالَّذِي اسْتَمْوَتْهُ الشَّيَاطِينُ فِي  
الْأَرْضِ حَيْرَانَ  
لَهُ أَصْحَابٌ يَدْعُونَهُ إِلَى الْهُدَىٰ انْتَبَاهُ  
قُلْ إِنْ هَدَىٰ اللَّهُ  
هُوَ الْهُدَىٰ  
وَأَمْرُنَا لِلَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ ۝

۲- وَأَنْ أَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ  
وَاتَّقُوا  
وَهُوَ الَّذِي إِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ ۝

۳- وَهُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ  
بِالْحَقِّ ۚ وَيَوْمَ يَقُولُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ ۚ

895 In continuation of the seven heads of argument referred to in nn 876 and 885 we have here the final two heads (8) who would after receiving guidance from the living eternal God turn to lifeless idols? To do so would indeed show that we were made into fools wandering to a precipice (9) therefore accept the only true guidance the guidance of God and obey His Law for we shall have to answer before His judgment seat

896 The argument mounts up here leading to the great insight of Abraham the true in faith, who did not stop short at the wonders of nature but penetrated from nature up to nature's God " God not only created the heavens and the earth with every increase of knowledge we see in what true and perfect proportions all Creation is held together Creatures are subject to Time but the Creator is not His word is the key that opens the door of existence It is not only the starting point of existence but the whole measure and standard of Truth and Right There may possibly be to our sight in this great world aberrations of human or other wills but the moment the trumpet sounds for the last day His judgment seat will with perfect justice, restore the dominion of Right and Reality For His knowledge and wisdom cover all reality

Behold ! it is His Word  
Is the Truth His will be  
The dominion the day  
The trumpet will be blown  
He knoweth what ye  
Keep secret and what ye  
Make known For He  
Is the Wise, well acquainted  
(With all things)

74 **Jer** ! Abraham said  
To his father Azar  
" Takest thou idols for gods ?  
For I see thee  
And thy people  
In manifest error "

75 So also did We show <sup>897</sup>  
Abraham the power  
And the laws of the heavens  
And the earth, that he  
Might (with understanding)  
Have certitude

76 When the night  
Covered him over,  
He saw a star  
He said " This is my Lord "  
But when it set,  
He said " I love not  
Those who set " <sup>898</sup>

77 When he saw the moon  
Rising in splendour,  
He said " This is my Lord "  
But when the moon set,

قَوْلُهُ الْحَقُّ  
وَلَهُ الْمُلْكُ  
يَوْمَ نُفَعُ فِي الصُّورِ  
عِلْمُ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ  
وَهُوَ الْحَكِيمُ الْخَبِيرُ ○

٤٣- وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ لِأَبِيهِ أَرَارَ  
أَتَتَّخِذُ أَصْنَامًا آلِهَةً  
إِنِّي أَرَىٰ أَرْبَابَكَ وَفُؤْمَكَ فِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ ○

٤٥- وَكَذَلِكَ نُرِي  
إِبْرَاهِيمَ مَلَكُوتَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ  
وَلِيَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْمُوقِنِينَ ○

٤٦- فَلَمَّا جَنَّ عَلَيْهِ اللَّيْلُ  
رَأَىٰ كَوْكَبًا  
قَالَ هَذَا رَبِّي  
فَلَمَّا أَفَلَ قَالَ لَا أُحِبُّ الْإِفْلِينَ ○

٤٧- فَلَمَّا رَأَى الْقَمَرَ بَازِعًا  
قَالَ هَذَا رَبِّي فَلَمَّا أَفَلَ

897 Now comes the story of Abraham He lived among the Chaldeans who had great knowledge of the stars and heavenly bodies But he got beyond that physical world and saw the spiritual world behind His ancestral idols meant nothing to him That was the first step But God took him many degrees higher God showed him with certitude the spiritual glories behind the magnificent powers and laws of the physical universe

898 This allegory shows the stages of Abraham's spiritual enlightenment It should not be supposed that he literally worshipped stars or heavenly bodies Having seen through the folly of ancestral idol worship he began to see the futility of worshipping distant beautiful things that shine which the vulgar endue with a power which does not reside in them A type of such is a star shining in the darkness of the night Superstition might read fortunes in it but truer knowledge shows that it rises and sets according to laws whose author is God And its light is extinguished in the broader light of day Its worship is therefore futile It is not a Power much less the Supreme Power

He said " Unless my Lord  
Guide me, I shall surely  
Be among those  
Who go astray " <sup>899</sup>

- 78 When he saw the sun  
Rising in splendour,  
He said " This is my Lord ,  
This is the greatest (of all) "  
But when the sun set,  
He said " Oh my people !  
I am (now) free  
From your (guilt)  
Of giving partners to God " <sup>900</sup>

- 79 " For me, I have set  
My face, firmly and truly,  
Towards Him Who created  
The heavens and the earth,  
And never shall I give  
Partners to God "

- 80 His people disputed <sup>901</sup>  
With him He said  
" (Come) ye to dispute  
With me, about God,  
When He (Himself)  
Hath guided me ?  
I fear not (the beings)  
Ye associate with God

قَالَ لَئِنْ لَّمْ يَهْدِنِي رَبِّي  
لَا كُونَنَّ مِنَ الْقَوْمِ الضَّالِّينَ ○

٨٠- فَلَمَّا رَأَى الشَّمْسُ بَارِعَةً  
قَالَ هَذَا رَبِّي  
هَذَا أَكْبَرُ  
فَلَمَّا أَفَلَتْ  
قَالَ يَقَوْمِ إِنِّي بَرِيءٌ مِمَّا تُشْرِكُونَ ○

٨١- إِنِّي وَجَّهْتُ وَجْهِيَ لِلَّذِي  
فَطَرَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ حَنِيعًا  
وَمَا أَنَا مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ○

٨٠- وَحَاجَّةً قَوْمُهُ  
قَالَ أَمْحَاجُونَ فِي اللَّهِ  
وَقَدْ هَدَانِ  
وَلَا أَخَافُ مَا تُشْرِكُونَ بِهِ

<sup>899</sup> Continuing the allegory the moon though she looks bigger and brighter than the star, turns out on closer knowledge not only to set like the star but to change her shape from hour to hour and even to depend for her light on some other body ! How deceptive are appearances ! That is not God ! At that stage you begin to search for something more reliable than appearances to the eye in the darkness of the night You ask for guidance from God

<sup>900</sup> The next stage in the allegory is the sun You are in the open light of Day Now you have the right clue You see the biggest object in the heavens But is it the biggest ? There are thousands of stars in the universe bigger than the sun And every day the sun appears and disappears from your sight Such is not the God who created you and all these wonderful works of His Wh it folly to worship creatures when we might turn to the true God ? Let us abjure all these follies and proclaim one true God

<sup>901</sup> To continue Abraham's allegory if spiritual enlightenment go so far as to take a man beyond his ancestral worship people will come to dispute with him They will frighten him with the dire consequences of his dissent What does he care ? He has found the truth He is free from superstitious fears for has he not found the true God, without Whose Will nothing can happen ? On the contrary he knows that it is the godless who have just grounds for fear And he offers admonition to them, and arguments that should bring them the clearness of truth instead of the vagueness and mystery of superstition,—the security of Faith instead of the haunting fear of those who have no clear guidance

Unless my Lord willeth,  
(Nothing can happen)  
My Lord comprehendeth  
In His knowledge all things  
Will ye not (yourselves)  
Be admonished ?

إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ رَبِّي شَيْئًا  
وَسِعَ رَبِّي كُلَّ شَيْءٍ عِلْمًا  
أَفَلَا تُتَذَكَّرُونَ

- 81 "How should I fear  
(The beings) ye associate  
With God, when ye  
Fear not to give partners  
To God without any warrant  
Having been given to you ?  
Which of (us) two parties  
Hath more right to security ?  
(Tell me) if ye know

۸۱- وَكَيْفَ أَخَافُ مَا أَشْرَكْتُمْ  
وَلَا تَخَافُونَ أَنَّكُمْ أَشْرَكْتُمْ بِاللَّهِ  
مَا لَمْ يُنَزَّلْ بِهِ عَلَيْكُمْ سُلْطَانًا  
فَأَيُّ الْعَرِيقَيْنِ أَحَقُّ بِالْأَمْنِ  
إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ۝

- 82 "It is those who believe  
And confuse not their beliefs  
With wrong—that are  
(Truly) in security, for they  
Are on (right) guidance "

۸۲- الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَلَمْ يَلْبِسُوا إِيمَانَهُمْ  
بِطُلُمٍ أُولَئِكَ لَهُمُ الْأَمْنُ وَهُمْ مُهْتَدُونَ ۝

C 79 — The good men and true, who succeeded  
(vi 83 110) Abraham, received the gifts  
Of revelation and guidance, and kept  
Alive God's Message, which now  
Is proclaimed in the Qurān,  
In which is blessing and confirmation  
Of all that went before In the daily  
Pageants of Nature,— the dawn  
And the restful night, the sun,  
The moon, the stars that guide  
The mariner in distant seas,  
The rain clouds pouring abundance,  
And the fruits that delight the heart  
Of man—can ye not read  
Signs of God ? No vision can  
Comprehend Him, yet He  
Knoweth and comprehendeth all

#### SECTION 10

- 83 What was the reasoning  
About Us, which  
We gave to Abraham  
(To use) against his people 902

۸۳- وَتِلْكَ حُجَّتُنَا آتَيْنَاهَا إِبْرَاهِيمَ عَلَى  
قَوْمِهِ نَرْفَعُ دَرَجَاتٍ مَن نَّشَاءُ

902 The spiritual education of Abraham raised him many degrees above his contemporaries, and he was expected to use that knowledge and dignity for preaching the truth among his own people.

We raise whom We will,  
Degree after degree  
For thy Lord is full  
Of wisdom and knowledge

- 84 We gave him Isaac  
And Jacob all (three)  
We guided <sup>903</sup>  
And before him,  
We guided Noah, <sup>904</sup>  
And among his progeny,  
David, Solomon, Job,  
Joseph, Moses, and Aaron  
Thus do We reward  
Those who do good

- 85 And Zakariya and John, <sup>905</sup>  
And Jesus and Elias  
All in the ranks  
Of the Righteous

- 86 And Ismā'il and Elisha, <sup>906</sup>  
And Jonas, and Lot

إِنَّ رَبَّكَ حَكِيمٌ عَلِيمٌ ۝

٨٤- وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُ إِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ ۖ  
كُلًّا هَدَيْنَا ۖ وَنُوحًا هَدَيْنَا مِنْ قَبْلُ  
وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِهِ دَاوُدَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ وَأَيُّوبَ  
وَيُوسُفَ وَمُوسَى وَهَارُونَ ۖ  
وَكَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ ۝

٨٥- وَزَكَرِيَّا وَيَحْيَى وَعِيسَى وَإِلْيَاسَ  
كُلٌّ مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ ۝

٨٦- وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيُونُسَ وَلُوطًا ۖ

903 We have now a list of eighteen Apostles in four groups covering the great teachers accepted among the three great religions based on Moses Jesus and Muhammad. The first group to be mentioned is that of Abraham his son Isaac and Isaac's son Jacob. Abraham was the first to have a Book. His Book is mentioned in Q 1xxxvii 19 though it is now lost. They were therefore the first to receive Guidance in the sense of a Book.

904 In the second group we have the great founders of families apart from Abraham viz. Noah of the time of the Flood, David and Solomon the real establishers of the Jewish monarchy, Job who lived 140 years saw four generations of descendants and was blessed at the end of his life with large pastoral wealth (Job xlii 16-12). Joseph who as Minister of State did great things in Egypt and was the progenitor of two Tribes, and Moses and Aaron the leaders of the Exodus from Egypt. They led active lives and are called doers of good.

905 The third group consists not of men of action but Preachers of Truth who led solitary lives. Their epithet is the Righteous. They were mystic prophets and formed a connected group round Jesus. Zakariya was the father of John the Baptist the precursor of Jesus (iii 37-41) and Jesus referred to John the Baptist as Elias. This is Elias which was to come (Matt xi 14) and Elias is said to have been present and talked to Jesus at the Transfiguration on the Mount (Matt xvii 3). Elias is the same as Elijah.

906 This is the last group described as those favoured above the nations. It consists of four men who had all great misfortunes to contend with, and were concerned in the clash of nations, but they kept in the path of God and came through above the clash of nations. Isma'il was the eldest son of Abraham when he was a baby he and his mother had nearly died of thirst in the desert round Mecca, but they were saved by the well of Zamzam and he became the founder of the new Arab nation. Elisha (Al Yasa) succeeded to the mantle of the Prophet Elijah (same as Elias see last note) he lived in troublous times for both the Jewish kingdoms (of Judah and Israel) there were wicked kings and other nations were pressing in on them, but he performed many miracles and some check was given to the enemies under his advice. The story of Jonas (Yānus) is well known he was swallowed by a fish or whale but was saved by God's mercy through his preaching his city (Nineveh) was saved (x 98). Lot was a contemporary and nephew of Abraham when the city of Sodom was destroyed for its wickedness, he was saved as a just man (vii 80-84).

And to all We gave  
Favour above the nations

- 87 (To them) and to their fathers,<sup>907</sup>  
And progeny and brethren  
We chose them,  
And We guided them  
To a straight Way

- 88 This is the Guidance  
Of God He giveth  
That guidance to whom  
He pleaseth, of His worshippers  
If they were to join  
Other gods with Him,  
All that they did  
Would be vain for them

- 89 These were the men  
To whom We gave  
The Book, and Authority,  
And Prophethood if these  
(Their descendants) reject them,<sup>908</sup>  
Behold! We shall entrust  
Their charge to a new People  
Who reject them not

- 90 Those were the (prophets)  
Who received God's guidance  
Copy the guidance they received,  
Say "No reward for this  
Do I ask of you  
This is no less than  
A Message for the nations"

#### SECTION 11

- 91 **No** just estimate of God<sup>909</sup>  
Do they make when they say

وَكَلَّا فَضَّلْنَا عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ ٥

٨٧- وَمِنْ آبَائِهِمْ وَذُرِّيَّاتِهِمْ وَإِخْوَانِهِمْ  
وَاجْتَبَيْنَاهُمْ وَهَدَيْنَاهُمْ  
إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ ٥

٨٨- ذَلِكَ هُدَى اللَّهِ يَهْدِي بِهِ مَنْ  
يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ  
وَلَوْ أَشْرَكُوا لَحَبِطَ عَنْهُمْ  
مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ٥

٨٩- أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَ  
الْحُكْمَ وَالنُّبُوَّةَ  
وَإِنْ يَكْفُرْ بِهَا هَؤُلَاءِ فَقَدْ وَكَلْنَا بِهَا  
قَوْمًا لَيَكْفُرُوا بِهَا بِكَفَرَيْنٍ ٥

٩٠- أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ هَدَى اللَّهُ  
فَبِهِدَاهِهِمْ اقْتَدِهْ  
قُلْ لَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا  
إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا ذِكْرٌ لِلْعَالَمِينَ ٥

٩١- وَمَا قَدَرُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهِ إِذْ قَالُوا

907 I take verse 87 to refer back to all the four groups just mentioned

908 *Them* i.e. the Book, and Authority and Prophethood They were taken away from the other People of the Book and entrusted to the holy Apostle Muhammad and his People

909 *Qadara* to weigh judge or estimate the value or capacity of anything, to have power so to do Cf *Qadir* in iv 149 and n 655 The Jews who denied the inspiration of Muhammad had a good answer in their own books about the inspiration of Moses To those who do not believe in Moses the answer is more general is it a just estimate of God to think either that He has not the power or the will to guide mankind seeing that He is Omnipotent and the Source of all good? If you say that guidance comes not through an inspired book or man, but through our general intelligence we point to the spiritual ignorance of you and your ancestors, "the sad spiritual darkness of men and nations high in the intellectual scale

"Nothing doth God send down  
To man (by way of revelation)"  
Say "Who then sent down  
The Book which Moses brought ?—  
A light and guidance to man <sup>910</sup>  
But ye make it into  
(Separate) sheets for show, <sup>911</sup>  
While ye conceal much  
(Of its contents) therein  
Were ye taught that  
Which ye knew not—  
Neither ye nor your fathers "  
Say "God (sent it down)"  
Then leave them to plunge  
In vain discourse and trifling

- 92 And this is a Book  
Which We have revealed,  
Bringing blessings, <sup>912</sup> and  
confirming  
(The revelations) which came  
Before it that thou  
Mayest warn the Mother <sup>913</sup>  
Of Cities and all around her  
Those who believe  
In the Hereafter  
Believe in this (Book),  
And they are constant  
In guarding their Prayers <sup>914</sup>

- 93 **W**ho can be more wicked  
Than one who inventeth

مَا أَرْسَلَ اللَّهُ عَلَى بَشَرٍ مِنْ شَيْءٍ  
فَلْ مِنْ أَنْزَلَ الْكِتَابَ الَّذِي جَاءَ بِهِ  
مُوسَى نُورًا وَهُدًى لِلنَّاسِ  
تَجْعَلُونَهُ قَرَاطِيسَ تُبْدُونَهَا  
وَتُخْفُونَ كَثِيرًا  
وَعُلِمْتُمْ مَا لَمْ تَعْلَمُوا أَنْتُمْ وَلَا  
آبَاؤُكُمْ قُلِ اللَّهُ  
ثُمَّ ذَرَهُمْ فِي خَوْضِهِمْ يَلْعَبُونَ ○  
۹۲- وَهَذَا الْكِتَابُ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ مُبَارَكًا مُصَدِّقًا  
الَّذِي بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَلِتُنذِرَ أُمَّ الْقُرَى  
وَمَنْ حَوْلَهَا  
وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ  
يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِ  
وَهُمْ عَلَى صَلَاتِهِمْ يُحَافِظُونَ ○

۹۳- وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ

910 Cf v 47 and n 750 and v 49 In those passages Guidance (in practical conduct) is put before Light (or spiritual insight), as they refer to ordinary or average men Here Light (or spiritual insight) is put first as the question is 'does God send inspiration'

911 The Message to Moses had unity it was one Book The present Old Testament is a collection of odd books ( sheets ) of various kinds see Appendix II end of S v In this way you can make a show, but there is no unity, and much of the spirit of the original is lost or concealed or overlaid The same applies to the New Testament see Appendix III, after Appendix II

912 *Mubārak* blessed as having received God's blessing bringer of blessings to others, as having been blessed by God God's highest blessing is the Guidance and Light which the Book brings to us, and which brings us nearer to Him

913 *Mother of Cities* Mecca now the Qibla and Centre of Islam If this verse was (like the greater part of the Chapter) revealed in Mecca before the Hijrat and before Mecca was made the Qibla of Islam Mecca was nonetheless the Mother of Cities, being traditionally associated with Abraham and with Adam and Eve (see u 125, and n 217 to u 197)

*All round Mecca* would mean, the whole world if we look upon Mecca as the Centre

914 An earnest study of the Quran is true worship, so is Prayer, and so are all deeds of goodness and charity

A lie against God,  
Or saith, "I have  
Received inspiration,"  
When he hath received  
None, or (again) who saith,  
"I can reveal the like  
Of what God hath revealed"?  
If thou couldst but see  
How the wicked (do fare)  
In the flood of confusion  
At death!—the angels  
Stretch forth their hands,  
(Saying), "Yield up your souls" 915  
This day shall ye receive  
Your reward,—a penalty  
Of shame, for that ye used  
To tell lies against God,  
And scornfully to reject  
Of His Signs! "

94 "And behold! ye come  
To Us bare and alone  
As We created you  
For the first time" 916  
Ye have left behind you  
All (the favours) which  
We bestowed on you  
We see not with you  
Your intercessors  
Whom ye thought to be  
Partners in your affairs  
So now all relations  
Between you have been  
Cut off, and your (pet) fancies  
Have left you in the lurch! " 917

افترى على الله كذبا أو قال أوحى إلى  
ولم يوح إليه شيء  
ومن قال سأ نزل مثل ما أنزل الله  
ولو ترى إذ الظالمون  
في غمرات الموت  
والملائكة باسطوا أيديهم  
أخرجوا أنفسكم  
اليوم تجزون عذاب الهون  
بما كنتم تقولون على الله غير الحق  
وكنتم عن آياته تستكبرون ○

٩٣-وَلَقَدْ جِئْتُمُونَا فِرَادَى  
كَمَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ  
وَتَرَكْتُمْ مَا خَوَّلْنَاكُمْ وَرَاءَ ظُهُورِكُمْ  
وَمَا نَرَى مَعَكُمْ شُفَعَاءَ كُمُ الَّذِينَ  
زَعَمْتُمْ أَنَّهُمْ فِيكُمْ شُرَكَاءُ  
لَقَدْ نَقَطَ بَيْنَكُمْ  
وَضَلَّ عَنْكُمْ مَا كُنْتُمْ تَزْعُمُونَ ٩٤

915 *Yield up your souls* or get your souls to come out of your bodies The wicked we may suppose are not anxious to part with the material existence in their bodies for the reward which in irony is stated to be there to welcome them

916 Some of the various ideas connected with creation are noted in n 120 to n 117 In the creation of man there are various processes If his body was created out of clay i e earthy matter there was an earlier process of the creation of such earthy matter Here the body is left behind and the soul is being addressed The soul underwent various processes of fashioning and adapting to its various functions in its various surroundings (xxxii 79) But each individual soul after release from the body comes back as it was created with nothing more than its history the deeds which it has earned which are really a part of it Any exterior things given to help in its development "the favours which we bestowed on you" it must necessarily leave behind however it may have been proud of them These exterior things may be material things e g wealth property signs of power influence and pride such as sons relatives and friends, etc or they may be intangible things like talents intellect social gifts etc

917 The false ideas of intercessors demi gods gods saviours etc now vanish like unsubstantial visions "leaving not a wrack behind" Now the soul is face to face with reality Its personal responsibility is brought home to it



## SECTION 12

95 ¶ It is God Who causeth <sup>918</sup>  
 The seed-grain  
 And the date-stone  
 To split and sprout <sup>919</sup>  
 He causeth the living  
 To issue from the dead,  
 And He is the One  
 To cause the dead  
 To issue from the living <sup>920</sup>  
 That is God then how  
 Are ye deluded  
 Away from the truth ?

٩٥- إِنْ أَلِلَّهِ فَالِإِلَهِ الْحَيِّ وَالْقَوِيِّ  
 يُخْرِجُ الْحَيَّ  
 مِنَ الْمَيِّتِ  
 وَيُخْرِجُ الْمَيِّتِ  
 مِنَ الْحَيِّ  
 ذَلِكَمُ اللَّهُ فَأَلَيْ تُؤْفَكُونَ ○

918 Another beautiful nature passage referring to God's wonderful artistry in His Creation. In how few and how simple words the whole pageant of Creation is placed before us! Beginning from our humble animal needs and dependence on the vegetable world we are asked to contemplate the interaction of the living and the dead. Here is mystic teaching referring not only to physical life but to the higher life above the physical plane—not only to individual life but to the collective life of nations. Then we take a peep into the daily miracle of morning noon and night and pass on to the stars that guide the distant mariner. We rise still higher to the mystery of the countless individuals from the one human soul—their sojourn and their destiny. So we get back to the heavens—the description of the luscious fruits which the gentle rain from heaven produces leaves us to contemplate the spiritual fruits which faith will provide for us with the aid of the showers of God's mercy.

919 The seed grain and the date stone are selected as types in the vegetable kingdom showing how our physical life depends on it. The fruits mentioned later (in vi 99) start another allegory which we shall notice later. Botanists will notice that the seed grain includes the cereals (such as wheat barley rice millet etc.) which are monocotyledons as well as the pulses (such as beans peas gram etc.) and other seeds which are dicotyledons. These two represent the most important classes of food grains while the date palm a monocotyledon represents for Arabians both food fruit confectionery thatch and pillars for houses shady groves in oases and a standard measure of wealth and well being. *Split and sprout* both ideas are included in the root *falaqa* and a third is expressed by the word *cleave* in the next verse for the action of evolving day break from the dark. I might almost have used the word *churn* familiar to students of Hindu lore in the Hindu allegory of the churning of the ocean. For vegetables split and sprout represents a double process (1) the seed divides, and (2) one part shoots up seeking the light and forming leaves and the visible parts of the future tree and the other part digs down into the dark forming the roots and seeking just that sustenance from the soil which is adapted for the particular plant. This is just one small instance of the judgment and ordering of God referred to in the next verse.

920 This does not mean that in physical nature there are no limits between life and non life between the organic and the non organic. In fact physicists are baffled at the barrier between them and frankly confess that they cannot solve the mystery of Life. If there is such a barrier in physical nature is it not all the more wonderful that God can create Life out of nothing? He has but to say

Be! and it is. He can bring Life from non Life and annihilate Life. But there are two other senses in which we can contemplate the contrast between the living and the dead. (1) We have just been speaking of the botanical world. Take it as a whole and see the contrast between the winter of death the spring of revivification, the summer of growth and the autumn of decay leading back to the death of winter. Here is a cycle of living from dead and dead from living. (2) Take our spiritual life individual or collective. We rise from the darkness of spiritual nothingness to the light of spiritual life. And if we do not follow the spiritual laws God will take away that life and we shall be again as dead. We may die many deaths. The keys of life and death are in God's hands. Neither Life nor Death are fortuitous things. Behind them both is the Cause of Causes—and only He.

96 He it is that cleaveth  
The day-break (from the dark) ·  
He makes the night  
For rest and tranquillity,  
And the sun and moon  
For the reckoning (of time)  
Such is the judgment <sup>921</sup>  
And ordering of (Him),  
The Exalted in Power,  
The Omniscient

٩٦- فَأَلْقَى الْإِضْبَاجَ  
وَجَعَلَ اللَّيْلَ سَكَنًا  
وَالشَّمْسَ  
وَالْقَمَرَ حُسْبَانًا  
ذَلِكَ تَقْدِيرُ  
الْعَزِيزِ الْعَلِيمِ ○

97 It is He Who maketh  
The stars (as beacons) for you,  
That ye may guide yourselves,  
With their help,  
Through the dark spaces  
Of land and sea <sup>922</sup>  
We detail Our Signs  
For people who know

٩٧- وَهُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ النُّجُومَ  
لِتَهْتَدُوا بِهَا  
فِي ظُلُمَاتِ الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ  
قَدْ فَصَّلْنَا الْآيَاتِ  
لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ ○

98 It is He Who hath  
Produced you <sup>923</sup>  
From a single person  
Here is a place of sojourn  
And a place of departure <sup>924</sup>  
We detail Our signs  
For people who understand

٩٨- وَهُوَ الَّذِي أَنْشَأَكُمْ  
مِّن نَّفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ  
فَمُسْتَقَرٌّ وَمُسْتَوْدَعٌ  
قَدْ فَصَّلْنَا الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَفْقَهُونَ ○

921 The night, the day the sun the moon —the great astronomical universe of God How far and yet how near to us ! God's universe is boundless and we can barely comprehend even its relations to us But this last we must try to do if we want to be numbered with the people who know " *Taqdir* Cf vi 91 and n 909 and ix 149 and n 655

922 See the last note At sea or in deserts or forests or in fairy scenes forlorn — whenever we sweep over wide spaces it is the stars that act as our guides just as the sun and moon have already been mentioned as our measures of time

923 *Produced ansha-a*=made you grow increase develop reach maturity another of the processes of creation This supplements n 120 to ii 117 and n 916 to vi 94 It is one of the wonders of God's Creation that from one person we have grown to be so many and each individual has so many faculties and capacities and yet we are all one In the next verse we have the allegory of grapes and other fruits all grapes may be similar to look at yet each variety has a distinctive flavour and other distinctive qualities and each individual grape may have its own special qualities So for man

924 In the sojourn of this life we must respond to God's hand in fashioning us by making full use of all our faculties, and we must get ready for our departure into the Life that will be eternal

99 It is He Who sendeth down  
 Rain from the skies <sup>925</sup>  
 With it We produce  
 Vegetation of all kinds  
 From some We produce  
 Green (crops), out of which  
 We produce grain,  
 Heaped up (at harvest),  
 Out of the date-palm  
 And its sheaths (or spathes)  
 (Come) clusters of dates  
 Hanging low and near  
 And (then there are) gardens  
 Of grapes, and olives,  
 And pomegranates,  
 Each similar (in kind)  
 Yet different (in variety) <sup>926</sup>  
 When they begin to bear fruit,  
 Feast your eyes with the fruit  
 And the ripeness thereof <sup>927</sup>  
 Behold ! in these things  
 There are Signs for people  
 Who believe <sup>928</sup>

٩٩- وَهُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً  
 فَأَخْرَجْنَا بِهِ نَبَاتَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ  
 فَأَخْرَجْنَا مِنْهُ خَضِرًا  
 نُخْرِجُ مِنْهُ حَبًّا مُتَرَاكِبًا  
 وَمِنَ النَّخْلِ مِنْ طَلْعِهَا  
 قِنْوَانٌ دَانِيَةٌ  
 وَجَنَّاتٍ مِنْ أَعْنَابٍ  
 وَالزَّيْتُونِ وَالرَّمَّانِ مُشْتَبِهًا  
 وَغَيْرَ مُتَشَابِهٍ  
 انظُرُوا إِلَى ثَمَرِهِ  
 إِذَا أَثْمَرَ وَيَنْعِهِ  
 إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ  
 لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ○

925 Our allegory now brings us to maturity the fruit the harvest the vintage Through the seed we came up from nothingness to life we lived our daily life of rest and work and passed the mile stones of time we had the spiritual experience of traversing through vast spaces in the spiritual world guiding our course through the star of Faith we grew and now for the harvest or the vintage! How satisfied the grower must be when the golden grain is harvested in heaps or the vintage gathered! So will man if he has produced the fruits of Faith!

926 Each fruit—whether it is grapes or olives or pomegranates—looks alike in its species and yet each variety may be different in flavour consistency shape size colour juice or oil contents proportion of seed to fruit etc. In each variety individuals may be different Apply the allegory to man whose varied spiritual fruit may be equally different and yet equally valuable!

927 And so we finish this wonderful allegory Search through the world's literature and see if you can find another such song or hymn—so fruitful in its literary flavour so profound in its spiritual meaning!

928 There is a refrain in this song which is subtly varied In verse 97 it is We detail our Signs for people who *know* So far we were speaking of the things we see around us every day Knowledge is the appropriate instrument for these things In verse 98 we read We detail Our Signs for people who *understand* Understanding is a higher faculty than knowledge, and is necessary for seeing the mystery and meaning of this life At the end of verse 99 we have

In these things there are Signs for people who *believe* Here we are speaking of the real fruits of spiritual Life For them Faith is necessary, as bringing us nearer to God

- 100 Yet they make  
The Jinns equals<sup>929</sup>  
With God, though God  
Did create the Jinns ,  
And they falsely,  
Having no knowledge,  
Attribute to Him  
Sons and daughters  
Praise and glory be  
To Him! (for He is) above  
What they attribute to Him!

١٠٠- وَجَعَلُوا لِلَّهِ شُرَكَاءَ الْجِنَّ  
وَخَلَقَهُمْ  
وَخَرَفُوا لَهُ بَنِينَ  
وَنَدَبَتْ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ  
سُبْحَانَهُ  
وَتَعَالَى عَمَّا يُصِفُونَ ۝

١٠٣

### SECTION 13

- 101 No Him is due  
The primal origin  
Of the heavens and the earth<sup>930</sup>  
How can He have a son  
When He hath no consort?  
He created all things,  
And He hath full knowledge  
Of all things

١٠١- نَدِيعُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ  
أَنَّى يَكُونُ لَهُ وَلَدٌ  
وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ صَاحِبَةٌ  
وَخَلَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ  
وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ۝

- 102 That is God, your Lord!  
There is no god but He,  
The Creator of all things  
Then worship ye Him  
And He hath power  
To dispose of all affairs

١٠٢- دَلِيلُكُمْ اللَّهُ رَبُّكُمْ  
لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ  
خَالِقُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ فَاعْبُدُوهُ  
وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَكِيلٌ ۝

- 103 No vision can grasp Him,  
But His grasp is over

١٠٣- لَا تَدْرِكُهُ الْبَصَارُ وَهُوَ يُدْرِكُ

929 Jinns who are they? In xviii 50 we are told that Iblis was one of the Jinns and it is suggested that that was why he disobeyed the Command of God. But in this passage and other similar passages we are told that God commanded the angels to bow down to Adam and they obeyed except Iblis. That implies that Iblis had been of the company of angels. In many passages Jinns and men are spoken of together. In lv 14 15 man is stated to have been created from clay while Jinns from a flame of fire. The root meaning of *janna yajunnu*, is 'to be covered or hidden' and *janna yajunnu* in the active voice 'to cover or hide, as in vi 76. Some people say that *jinn* therefore means the hidden qualities or capacities in man others that it means wild or jungle folk hidden in the hills or forests. I do not wish to be dogmatic, but I think from a collation and study of the Quranic passages that the meaning is simply 'a spirit,' or an invisible or hidden force. In folk lore stories and romances like the Arabian Nights they become personified into fantastic forms, but with them we are not concerned here,

All vision He is  
Above all comprehension,<sup>931</sup>  
Yet is acquainted with all things

أَلَا بَصَارٌ  
وَهُوَ اللَّطِيفُ الْخَبِيرُ ۝

- 104 “ Now have come to you,  
From your Lord, proofs  
To open your eyes  
If any will see,  
It will be for (the good  
Of) his own soul ,  
If any will be blind,  
It will be to his own  
(Harm) I am not (here)  
To watch over your doings ”<sup>932</sup>

۱۰۴- قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ  
بَصَائِرُ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ  
فَمَنْ أَبْصَرَ  
فَلَِنَفْسِهِ  
وَمَنْ عَمِيَ فَعَلَيْهَا  
وَمَا أَنَا عَلَيْكُمْ بِحَفِظٍ ۝

- 105 Thus do We explain  
The Signs by various (symbols) <sup>933</sup>  
That they may say ,  
“ Thou hast taught us diligently ,”  
And that We may make  
The matter clear  
To those who know <sup>934</sup>

۱۰۵- وَكَذَلِكَ نُصَرِّفُ الْآيَاتِ  
وَلِيَقُولُوا دَرَسْتَ  
وَلِنُبَيِّنَهُ  
لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ ۝

- 106 Follow what thou art taught  
By inspiration from thy Lord  
There is no god but He  
And turn aside from those  
Who join gods with God

۱۰۶- اَتَّبِعْ مَا أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ  
لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ  
وَاعْرِضْ عَنِ الْمُسْرِكِينَ ۝

931 *Laṭīf* fine, subtle, so fine and subtle is to be invisible to the physical eye so fine as to be imperceptible to the senses figuratively so pure is to be above the mental or spiritual vision of ordinary men The active meaning should also be understood One who understands the finest mysteries (cf xxii 63 and n 2838)

932 I understand ‘ Say to be understood in the beginning of this verse The words would then be the words of the Apostle as in fact is suggested in verse 107 below That is why I have enclosed them in inverted commas

933 Cf vi 65 and n 889

934 The teaching in the Quran explains things by various symbols, parables, narratives, and appeals to nature Each time a new phase of the question is presented to our minds This is what a diligent and earnest teacher would do, such as was Muḥammad Muṣṭafa Those who were in search of knowledge and had thus acquired some knowledge of spiritual things were greatly helped to understand more clearly the things of which, before the varied explanations, they had only one-sided knowledge

107 If it had been God's Plan,<sup>935</sup>

They would not have taken  
False gods but We  
Made thee not one  
To watch over their doings,  
Nor art thou set  
Over them to dispose  
Of their affairs

١٠٧- وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ  
مَا أَتَوْا  
وَمَا جَعَلْنَاكَ  
عَلَيْهِمْ حَفِظًا  
وَمَا أَنْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ بِوَكِيلٍ ٥

108 **R**evile not ye

Those whom they call upon  
Besides God, lest  
They out of spite  
Revile God  
In their ignorance  
Thus have We made  
Alluring to each people<sup>936</sup>  
Its own doings  
In the end will they  
Return to their Lord,  
And We shall then

١٠٨- وَلَا تَسُبُّوا الَّذِينَ  
نَدُّوْنَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ  
فَيَسُبُّوا اللَّهَ عَدْوًا  
بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ  
كَذَلِكَ رَفِئْنَا  
بِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ عَمَلَهُمْ  
ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ مَرْجِعُهُمْ

935 God's Plan is to use the human will to co-operate in understanding Him and His relations to us. This is the answer to an objector who might say: 'If He is All powerful why do sins or evil exist in the world?' Can He not destroy it? He can but His Plan is different and in any case it is not for a Teacher to force any one to accept the truths which he is inspired to preach and proclaim.

936 A man's actual personal religion depends upon many things,—his personal psychology the background of his life his hidden or repressed feelings tendencies or history (which psycho-analysis tries to unravel) his hereditary dispositions or antipathies and all the subtle influences of his education and his environment. The task before the man of God is (1) to use any of these which can subserve the higher ends (2) to purify such as have been misused (3) to introduce new ideas and modes of looking at things and (4) to combat what is wrong and cannot be mended all for the purpose of leading to the truth and gradually letting in spiritual light where there was darkness before. If that is not done with discretion and the skill of a spiritual Teacher there may be not only a reaction of obstinacy but an unseemly show of dishonour to the true God and His Truth, and doubts would spread among the weaker brethren whose faith is shallow and infirm. What happens to individuals is true collectively of nations or groups of people. They think in their self-obsession that their own ideas are right. God in His infinite compassion bears with them and asks those who have purer ideas of faith not to vilify the weaknesses of their neighbours lest the neighbours in their turn vilify the real truth and make matters even worse than before. In so far as there are mistakes God will forgive and send His grace for helping ignorance and folly. In so far as there is active evil He will deal with it in His own way. Of course the righteous man must not hide his light under a bushel, or compromise with evil, or refuse to establish right living where he has the power to do so.

Tell them the truth  
Of all that they did

- 109 **They** swear their strongest  
Oaths by God, that if  
A (special) Sign came  
To them, by it they would  
Believe Say "Certainly  
(All) Signs are in the power  
Of God but what He  
Wishes you (Muslims)  
To understand is  
That (even) if a (special) Sign  
Comes, they will not believe " 937

- 110 We (too) shall turn  
To (confusion) their hearts<sup>938</sup>  
And their eyes, as they  
Refused to believe  
In the first instance  
We shall leave them

7 In their trespasses,

30 To wander in distraction<sup>939</sup>

فَيَنْبِئُهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ٥

١٠٩- وَأَنْفُسُكُمْ  
بِاللَّهِ حَقَّ آيَاتِهِمْ  
لَيْنَ حَاءَ تَنْهَمُ آيَةً  
لَكِبُوا مِنْتَ بِهَا  
قُلْ إِنَّمَا الْآيَاتُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ  
وَمَا يُشْعِرُكُمْ  
أَنَّهُمْ إِذَا جَاءَتْ  
لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ٥

١١٠- وَنُقَلِّبُ أَفْئِدَتَهُمْ  
وَأَبْصَارَهُمْ كَمَا لَمْ يُؤْمِرُوا بِهِ  
أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ  
وَنَذَرُهُمْ فِي طَعَابِهِمْ يُعْمَلُونَ ٥

١١٠

937 If the Unbelievers are merely obstinate nothing will convince them There is no story more full of miracles than the story of Jesus Yet in that same story we are told that Jesus said

A wicked adulterous generation seeketh after a sign, and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the Prophet Jonas ' Mitt xvi 4 There are Signs given by God every day—understood by those who believe A mere insistence upon some particular or special Sign means mere contumacy and misunderstanding of the spiritual world

938 Where there is sheer obstinacy and ridicule of faith, the result will be that such a sinner's heart will be hardened and his eyes will be sealed so that he cannot even see the things visible to ordinary mortals The sinner gathers impetus in his descent towards wrong

939 Cf ii 15 God's grace is always ready to help human weakness or ignorance, and to accept repentance and give forgiveness But where the sinner is in actual rebellion he will be given rope, and it will be his own fault if he wanders about distractedly without any certain hope or refuge

## C 80 —Those in obstinate rebellion

- (v1 111 129) Against God are merely deceived  
 And deceive each other Leave them  
 Alone, but trust and obey God  
 Openly and in the inmost recesses  
 Of your heart The plans of the wicked  
 Are but plans against their own souls

## SECTION 14

- 111 **E**ven if We did send  
 Unto them angels,  
 And the dead did speak  
 Unto them, and We gathered  
 Together all things before<sup>940</sup>  
 Their very eyes, they are not  
 The ones to believe,  
 Unless it is in God's Plan  
 But most of them  
 Are ignorant (foolish)

- 112 Likewise did We make  
 For every Messenger  
 An enemy, -evil ones<sup>941</sup>  
 Among men and Jinns,  
 Inspiring each other  
 With flowery discourses  
 By way of deception  
 If thy Lord had so planned,  
 They would not have  
 Done it so leave them  
 And their inventions alone

- 113 To such (deceit)  
 Let the hearts of those  
 Incline, who have no faith  
 In the Hereafter let them  
 Delight in it, and let them  
 Earn from it what they may<sup>942</sup>

١١١- وَلَوْ أَنَّنَا نَزَّلْنَا إِلَهُمُ الْمَلَكُوتَ  
 وَكَلَّمَهُمُ الْمَوْتَى  
 وَحَشَرْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ قُبُلًا  
 مَا كَانُوا لِيُؤْمِنُوا إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ  
 وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ يَجْهَلُونَ ○

١١٢- وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَا لِكُلِّ نَبِيٍّ  
 عَدُوًّا شَاطِئِينَ الْإِنْسِ وَالْجِنِّ  
 يُوحِي بَعْضُهُمْ إِلَى بَعْضٍ  
 زُخْرُفَ الْقَوْلِ غُرُورًا  
 وَلَوْ شَاءَ رَبُّكَ مَا فَعَلُوهُ  
 فَذَرْهُمْ وَمَا يَفْتَرُونَ ○

١١٣- وَلِتَصْغَى إِلَيْهِ أَفْئِدَةُ الَّذِينَ  
 لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ وَلِيَرْضَوْهُ  
 وَلِيَقْتَرِفُوا مَا هُمْ مُقْتَرِفُونَ ○

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940 The most stupendous miracles even according to their ideas would not have convinced them. If the whole pageant of the spiritual world were brought before them they would not have believed because they—of their own choice and will—refuse knowledge and faith.

941 What happened in the history of the Holy Prophet happens in the history of all righteous men who have a Message from God. The spirit of evil is ever active and uses men to practise deception by means of highly embellished words and plausible excuses and objections. God permits these things in His Plan. It is not for us to complain. Our faith is tested and we must stand the test steadfastly.

942 People who have no faith in the future destiny of man may listen to and be taken in by the deceit of evil. If they take a delight in it, let them. See what they gain by it. Their gains will be as deceitful as their delight. For the end of evil must be evil.



- 114 Say "Shall I seek  
For judge other than God?—  
When He it is  
Who hath sent unto you  
The Book, explained in detail " 943  
They know full well,  
To whom We have sent  
The Book, that it hath come  
From thy Lord in truth  
Never be then  
Of those who doubt
- 115 The Word of thy Lord  
Doth find its fulfilment  
In truth and in justice  
None can change His Words  
For He is the one Who  
Heareth and knoweth all
- 116 Wert thou to follow  
The common run of those  
On earth, they will lead  
Thee away from the Way  
Of God They follow  
Nothing but conjecture they  
Do nothing but lie
- 117 Thy Lord knoweth best  
Who strayeth from His Way  
He knoweth best  
Who they are that receive  
His guidance
118. So eat of (meats)  
On which God's name  
Hath been pronounced,  
If ye have faith  
In His Signs
- 119 Why should ye not  
Eat of (meats) on which  
God's name hath been  
Pronounced, when He hath  
Explained to you in detail  
What is forbidden to you—
- ١١٤- أَفَغَيْرَ اللَّهِ أَبْتَغِي حَكْمًا  
وَهُوَ الَّذِي أَنزَلَ إِلَيْكُمُ  
الْكِتَابَ مُفَصَّلًا  
وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَهُمْ آلِ كُتُبٍ  
تَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّهُ مُنْزَلٌ مِنْ رَبِّكَ بِالْحَقِّ  
فَلَا تَكُونُوا مِنَ الْمُتَدَبِّينَ ○
- ١١٥- وَتَنَزَّلَتْ كَلِمَاتُ رَبِّكَ  
صِدْقًا وَعَدًا لَا لَاحُ مُنْزِلَ لِكَلِمَةٍ  
وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ○
- ١١٦- وَإِنْ تَطِعْ أَكْثَرُ مَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ  
يُضِلُّوكَ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ  
إِنْ يَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا الظَّنَّ  
وَإِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا يَخْرُصُونَ ○
- ١١٧- إِنْ رَبِّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ  
مَنْ يَضِلُّ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ  
وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ ○
- ١١٨- فَكُلُوا مِمَّا ذُكِّرَ اسْمُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ  
إِنْ كُنْتُمْ بِآيَاتِهِ مُؤْمِنِينَ ○
- ١١٩- وَمَا لَكُمْ أَلَّا تَأْكُلُوا مِمَّا ذُكِّرَ اسْمُ  
اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ  
وَقَدْ فَضَّلَ لَكُمْ مِمَّا حَرَّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ

943 The righteous man seeks no other standard of judgment but God's Will. How can he when God in His grace has explained His Will in the Qurān with details which men of every capacity can understand? The humblest can learn lessons of right conduct in daily life and the most advanced can find the highest wisdom in its spiritual teaching enriched as it is with all kind of beautiful illustrations from nature and the story of man.

Except under compulsion<sup>944</sup>  
Of necessity?  
But many do mislead  
By their appetites unchecked  
By knowledge Thy Lord  
Knoweth best those who  
transgress

- 120 Eschew all sin,  
Open or secret  
Those who earn sin  
Will get due recompense  
For their "earnings"

- 121 Eat not of (meats)  
On which God's name  
Hath not been pronounced  
That would be impiety  
But the evil ones  
Ever inspire their friends  
To contend with you  
If ye were to obey them,  
Ye would indeed be Pagans

#### SECTION 15

- 122 Can he who was dead,<sup>945</sup>  
To whom We gave life,  
And a Light whereby  
He can walk amongst men,  
Be like him who is  
In the depths of darkness,  
From which he can  
Never come out?  
For to those without Faith  
Their own deeds seem pleasing

- 123 Thus have We placed  
Leaders in every town,

إِلَّا مَا اضْطُرَرْتُمْ إِلَيْهِ  
وَأِنَّ كَثِيرًا لَيُضِلُّونَ بِأَهْوَاءِهِمْ  
بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ  
إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُعْتَدِينَ ○

١٢٠- وَذُرُوا ظَاهِرَ الْإِثْمِ وَبَاطِنَهُ  
إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَكْسِبُونَ الْإِثْمَ  
سَيُجْزَوْنَ بِمَا كَانُوا يَقْتَرِفُونَ ○

١٢١- وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا  
مِمَّا لَمْ يُذْكَرِ اسْمُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ  
وَرَاتَهُ لَفْسَقٌ ○ وَإِنَّ الشَّابِطِينَ  
لَبُؤُوحُونَ إِلَىٰ أَوْلِيَائِهِمْ لِيُجَادِلُوكُمْ  
وَإِنْ أَطَعْتُمُوهُمْ إِنَّكُمْ لَمُشْرِكُونَ ○

١٢٢- أَوْ مَنْ كَانَ مَيِّتًا فَأَحْيَيْنَاهُ  
وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُ نُورًا يَمْشِي بِهِ فِي النَّاسِ  
كَمَنْ مَثَلُهُ فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ  
لَيْسَ بِخَارِجٍ مِنْهَا  
كَذَلِكَ زُيِّنَ لِلْكَافِرِينَ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ○

١٢٣- وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَا فِي كُلِّ قَرْيَةٍ أَكْبَرًا

944 Cf v 4 When a clear law has explained what is lawful and unlawful in food, it is wrong to raise fresh scruples and mislead the ignorant

945 Here is an allegory of the good man with his divine mission and the evil man with his mission of evil. The former, before he got his spiritual life, was like one dead. It was God's grace that gave him spiritual life, with a Light by which he could walk and guide his own footsteps as well as the footsteps of those who are willing to follow God's light. The opposite type is that which hates God's light, which lives in the depths of darkness and which plots and burrows against all that is good. But the plots of evil recoil on itself, although it thinks that they will hurt the good. Can these two types be for a moment compared with each other? Perhaps the lead in every centre of population is taken by the men of evil. But the good men should not be discouraged. They should work in righteousness and fulfil their mission.

Its wicked men, to plot  
(And burrow) therein  
But they only plot  
Against their own souls,  
And they perceive it not

- 124 When there comes to them  
A Sign (from God),  
They say "We shall not  
Believe until we receive  
One (exactly) like those  
Received by the apostles" <sup>946</sup>  
God knoweth best where  
(And how) to carry out  
His mission Soon  
Will the wicked  
Be overtaken by  
Humiliation before God,  
And a severe punishment,  
For all their plots

- 125 Those whom God (in His Plan)  
Willeth to guide,—He openeth <sup>947</sup>  
Their breast to Islam,  
Those whom He willeth  
To leave straying,—He maketh  
Their breast close and  
constricted,  
As if they had to climb  
Up to the skies thus  
Doth God (heap) the penalty  
On those who refuse to believe

- 126 This is the Way  
Of thy Lord, leading straight

مُجْرِمِينَ لِيَنْتَكِرُوا فِيهَا  
وَمَا يَنْكُرُونَ إِلَّا أَنْفُسَهُمْ  
وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ ○

١٢٤- وَإِذَا جَاءَهُمْ آيَةٌ  
قَالُوا لَنْ نُؤْمِنَ حَتَّى نُؤْتَى  
مِثْلَ مَا أُوتِيَ رُسُلُ اللَّهِ  
اللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ حَيْثُ يَجْعَلُ رِسَالَتَهُ  
سَيُصِيبُ الَّذِينَ أَجْرَمُوا صَغَارٌ عِنْدَ  
اللَّهِ  
وَعَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ بِمَا كَانُوا يَنْتَكِرُونَ ○

١٢٥- فَمَنْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ أَنْ يَهْدِيَهُ  
يَشْرَحْ صَدْرَهُ لِلْإِسْلَامِ وَمَنْ يُرِدْ أَنْ  
يُضِلَّهُ يَجْعَلْ صَدْرَهُ ضَيِّقًا حَرَجًا  
كَأَنَّمَا يَصَّعَّدُ فِي السَّمَاءِ  
كَذَلِكَ يَجْعَلُ اللَّهُ الرِّجْسَ  
عَلَى الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ○  
١٢٦- وَهَذَا صِرَاطٌ رَبِّكَ مُسْتَقِيمٌ

946 Besides the teaching in God's Word and the teaching in God's world, of nature and history and human contacts many Signs come to the men of God which they humbly receive and try to understand and many Signs also come to the ungodly in the shape of warnings or otherwise, which the ungodly either do not heed or deliberately reject. The Signs in the two cases are not the same and that becomes one of their perverse arguments against Faith. But God's working will be according to His own Will and Plan and not according to the wishes or whims of the ungodly.

947 God's Universal Plan is the *Qadha wa Qadr* which is so much misunderstood. That Plan is unalterable and that is His Will. It means that in the spiritual world, as in the physical world, there are laws of justice, mercy, grace, penalty, etc. which work as surely as anything we know. If then, a man refuses Faith, becomes a rebel with each step he goes further and further down and his pace will be accelerated, he will scarcely be able to take spiritual breath and his recovery,—in spite of God's mercy which he has rejected—will be as difficult as if he had to climb up to the skies. On the other hand, the godly will find, with each step the next step easier. Jesus expressed this truth paradoxically: 'He that hath, to him shall be given, but he that hath not, from him shall be taken away even that which he hath.' Mark iv 25. John (vi 65) makes Jesus say: 'No man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.'

We have detailed the Signs  
For those who celebrate  
His praise

- 127 For them will be a Home  
Of Peace in the presence  
Of their Lord He will be  
Their Friend, because  
They practised (righteousness)

- 128 One day will He gather  
Them all together, (and say)  
"Oh ye assembly of Jinns!"<sup>949</sup>  
Many were the men  
Ye seduced" Their friends  
Amongst men will say  
"Our Lord! we made profit"<sup>950</sup>  
From each other but (alas!)  
We reached our term—  
Which Thou didst appoint  
For us" He will say  
"The Fire be your dwelling-place  
You will dwell therein for ever,  
Except as God willeth"<sup>951</sup>  
For thy Lord is full  
Of wisdom and knowledge

- 129 Thus do We make  
The wrong-doers turn  
To each other, because  
Of what they earn"<sup>952</sup>

قَدْ فَضَّلْنَا الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَكْفُرُونَ ○

١٢٧- لَهُمْ دَارُ السَّلَامِ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ

وَهُوَ وَلِيُّهُمْ

بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ○

١٢٨- وَيَوْمَ يُخْشَرُهُمْ جَمِيعًا

يَمَعْشَرِ الْجِنِّ

قَدْ اسْتَكْبَرْتُمْ مِنَ الْإِنْسِ

وَقَالَ أَوْلَيْتُمْهُمْ مِنَ الْإِنْسِ

رَبَّنَا اسْتَمْتَعَ بَعْضُنَا بِبَعْضٍ

وَبَلَّغْنَا آحْلُنَا الَّذِي آخَلْت لَنَا

قَالَ النَّارُ مَثْوَاكُمْ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا

إِلَّا مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ حَكِيمٌ عَلِيمٌ ○

١٢٩- وَكَذَلِكَ نُؤَلِّيُ بَعْضَ الظَّالِمِينَ

بَعْضًا بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ ○

C 81 —God punishes not mere negligence  
(vi 130 130) There are degrees in good and evil  
Deeds God is Merciful, but  
His Plan is sure, and none  
Can stand in its way We must  
Avoid all superstition, and all excess,  
And humbly ask for His guidance

949 Jinns are spirits—here evil spirits See vi 100 n 929

950 It is common experience that the forces of evil make in alliance with each other and seem thus to make a profit by their mutual log rolling. But this is only in this material world. When the limited term expires their unholy bargains will be exposed and there will be nothing but regrets.

951 Eternity and infinity are abstract terms. They have no precise meaning in our human experience. The qualification, "except as God willeth" makes it more intelligible as we can form some idea—however inadequate—of a Will and Plan and we know God by His attribute of Mercy as well as of Justice.

952 See n 950 above. Evil consorts with evil because of their mutual bargains. But in doing so they save the righteous from further temptation.

## SECTION 16

130 "O ye assembly of Jinns  
And men! came there not  
Unto you apostles from  
amongst you,<sup>953</sup>  
Setting forth unto you  
Our Signs, and warning you  
Of the meeting of this Day  
Of yours?" They will say  
"We bear witness against  
Ourselves" It was  
The life of this world  
That deceived them So  
Against themselves will they  
Bear witness that they  
Rejected Faith

131 (The apostles were sent) thus,  
So that thy Lord should not  
Destroy for their wrong-doing  
Men's habitations whilst  
Their occupants were unwarned

132 To each one is a degree<sup>954</sup>  
According to the deeds  
Which he doth for thy Lord  
Is not unmindful  
Of anything that they do

133 Thy Lord is Self-sufficient,<sup>955</sup>  
Full of Mercy if it were  
His Will, He could destroy  
You, and in your place  
Appoint whom He will  
As your successors, even as  
He raised you up  
From the posterity  
Of other people

١٣٠-يَسْغَرُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ  
أَلَمْ يَأْتِكُمْ رُسُلٌ مِّنكُمْ  
يَقْضُونَ عَلَيْكُمْ آيَاتِي  
وَيُنذِرُوكُم لِقَاءَ يَوْمِكُمْ هَذَا  
وَالْوَأَشْهَدْنَا عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِنَا  
وَعَزَّيْنَاهُمُ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا  
وَشَهِدُوا عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِهِمْ  
أَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا كَافِرِينَ ۝

١٣١-ذَلِكَ أَن لَّمْ يَكُن مَّرْثُكَ مُهْلِكَ  
الْقُرَىٰ بِظُلْمٍ  
وَأَهْلِهَا غَافِلُونَ ۝

١٣٢-وَلِكُلٍّ دَرَجَاتٌ مِّمَّا عَمِلُوا  
وَمَا رَبُّكَ بِغَافِلٍ  
عَمَّا يَعْمَلُونَ ۝

١٣٣-وَرَبُّكَ الْعَزِيزُ ذُو الرِّحْمَةِ  
إِنْ يَشَاءْ يُدْهِمكُمْ  
وَيَسْتَخْلِفْ مِنْ بَعْدِكُمْ  
مَّا يَشَاءُ كَمَا أَنشَأَكُم  
مِّن ذُرِّيَّةٍ قَوْمٍ آخَرِينَ ۝

953 Apostles from amongst you This is addressed to the whole gathering of men and Jinns Are the Jinns but disembodied spirits of evil men?

954 On good and evil there are infinite degrees, in our deeds and motives so will there be degrees in our spiritual position For everything is known to God, better than it is to ourselves

955 God is not dependent on our prayer or service It is out of His Mercy that He desires our own good Any race or people to whom He gives chances should understand that its failure does not affect God He could create others in their place, as He did in times past, and is doing in our own day, if only we had the wit to see it

- 134 All that hath been <sup>956</sup>  
Promised unto you  
Will come to pass  
Nor can ye frustrate it  
(In the least bit)

١٣٤- إِنْ مَا تُوْعَدُونَ لَا ئَ  
وَمَا أَنْتُمْ بِمُنْجِرِينَ ٥

- 135 Say "Oh my people!  
Do whatever ye can" <sup>957</sup>  
I will do (my part)  
Soon will ye know  
Who it is whose end  
Will be (best) in the Hereafter  
Certain it is that  
The wrong-doers will not prosper "

١٣٥- قُلْ يٰقَوْمِ اعْمَلُوا عَلَىٰ مَكَانَتِكُمْ  
إِنِّي عَامِلٌ ۚ فَسَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ  
مَنْ يَكُونُ لَهُ عَاقِبَةُ الدَّارِ  
إِنَّهُ لَا يُفْلِحُ الظَّالِمُونَ ٥

- 136 Out of what God  
Hath produced in abundance  
In tilth and in cattle,  
They assigned Him a share  
They say, according to their  
fancies <sup>958</sup>  
"This is for God, and this" -  
For Our "partners"!  
But the share of their "partners"  
Reacheth not God, whilst  
The share of God reacheth  
Their "partners"!  
Evil  
(And unjust) is their assignment!

١٣٦- وَجَعَلُوا لِلَّهِ مِمَّا ذَرَأَ مِنَ الْحَرْثِ وَ  
الْأَنْعَامِ  
نَصِيبًا فَقَالُوا هَذَا لِلَّهِ بِزَعْمِهِمْ  
وَهَذَا لِلشُّرَكَائِنَا  
فَمَا كَانَ لِلشُّرَكَائِهِمْ فَلَا يَصِلُ إِلَى اللَّهِ  
وَمَا كَانَ لِلَّهِ فَهُوَ يَصِلُ إِلَى شُرَكَائِهِمْ  
سَاءَ مَا يَحْكُمُونَ ٥

956 Both the good news and the warning which God's apostles came to give will be fulfilled. Nothing can stop God's Universal Plan. See n 947 to vi 125.

957 In so far as this is addressed to the Unbelievers it is a challenge. Do your utmost, nothing will deter me from my duty, we shall see who wins in the end. Passing from the particular occasion we can understand it in a more general sense which is true for all time. Let the evil ones do their worst. Let those who believe do all they can according to their opportunities and abilities. The individual must do the straight duty that lies before him. In the end God will judge and His judgment is always true and just.

958 There is scathing sarcasm here which some of the Commentators have missed. The Pagans have generally a big Pantheon though above it they have a vague idea of a Supreme God. But the material benefits go to the godlings, the fancied "partners" of God, for they have temples, priests, dedications, etc. while the true and supreme God has only lip worship or at best a share with numerous "partners". This was so in Arabia also. The shares assigned to the "partners" went to the priests and hangers-on of the "partners" who were many and clamorous for their rights. The share assigned to God possibly went to the poor but more probably went to the priests who had the cult of the "partners" for the Supreme God had no separate priests of His own. It is also said that when heaps were thus laid out if any portion of God's heap fell into the heaps of the "partners" the priests greedily and promptly appropriated it while in the contrary case the "partners'" priests were careful to reclaim any portion from what they called "God's heap". The absurdity of the whole thing is ridiculed. God created everything, how can He have a *share*?

137 Even so, in the eyes  
Of most of the Pagans,<sup>959</sup>  
Their "partners" made alluring  
The slaughter of their children,  
In order to lead them  
To their own destruction,  
And cause confusion  
In their religion  
If God had willed,  
They would not have done so  
But leave alone  
Them and their inventions

138 And they say that  
Such and such cattle and crops<sup>960</sup>  
Are taboo, and none should  
Eat of them except those  
Whom—so they say—We  
Wish, further, there are  
Cattle forbidden to yoke<sup>961</sup>  
Or burden, and cattle  
On which, (at slaughter),  
The name of God is not<sup>962</sup>  
Pronounced,—inventions  
Against God's name soon  
Will He requite them  
For their inventions

139 They say "What is  
In the wombs of  
Such and such cattle  
Is specially reserved  
(For food) for our men,  
And forbidden to our women,  
But if it is still-born,  
Then all share"<sup>963</sup>

١٣٧- وَكَذَلِكَ زَيَّنَ لِكَثِيرٍ مِّنَ الشُّرَكِيِّ  
قَتْلَ أَوْلَادِهِمْ شُرَكَاءُ هُمْ لِيُزِدُوهُمْ  
وَلِيَلْبِسُوا عَلَيْهِم دِينَهُمْ  
وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ  
مَا فَعَلُوهُ  
فَذَرْهُمْ وَمَا يَفْتَرُونَ ○

١٣٨- وَقَالُوا هَذِهِ أَنْعَامٌ وَهَذِهِ  
لَا يَطْعَمُهَا إِلَّا مَن سَاءَ  
بِرْغِبِهِمْ وَأَنْعَامٌ حَرَّمَتْ طُهُورُهَا وَ  
أَنْعَامٌ  
لَّا يَذْكُرُونَ اسْمَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهَا  
افْتِرَاءً عَلَيْهِ  
سَيَجْزِيهِمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَفْتَرُونَ ○

١٣٩- وَقَالُوا مَا فِي بُطُونِ هَذِهِ الْأَنْعَامِ  
خَالِصَةٌ لِّدُنُورِنَا  
وَمَحْرَمٌ عَلَىٰ أَرْوَاحِنَا  
وَإِنْ يَكُنْ مِنَّا فَهُمْ فِيهِ شُرَكَاءُ

959 The false gods and idols—among many nations including the Arabs were supposed to require human sacrifices. Ordinarily such sacrifices are revolting to man but they are made alluring"—a sacred rite—by Pagan custom which falsely arrogates to itself the name of religion. Such customs if allowed would do nothing but destroy the people who practise them and make their religion but a confused bundle of revolting superstitions.

960 A taboo of certain foods is sometimes a device of the priesthood to get special things for itself. It has to be enforced by pretending that the prohibition for others is by the Will of God. It is a lie or invention against God. Most superstitions are

961 Cattle dedicated to heathen gods may be reserved from all useful work, in that case they are a dead loss to the community and they may besides do a great deal of damage to fields and crops.

962 If meat is killed in the name of heathen gods it would naturally not be killed by the solemn rite in God's name by which alone the killing can be justified for food. See n 698 to v 5.

963 These are further Pagan superstitions about cattle. Some have already been noted in v 106 which may be consulted with the notes.

For their (false) attribution  
(Of superstitions to God),  
He will soon punish them  
For He is full  
Of wisdom and knowledge

سَيَجْزِيهِمْ وَصْفَهُمْ  
إِنَّهُ حَكِيمٌ عَلِيمٌ ٥

- 140 Lost are those who slay  
Their children, from folly,  
Without knowledge, and forbid  
Food which God hath provided  
For them, inventing (lies)  
Against God They have  
Indeed gone astray  
And heeded no guidance

١٣٩- قَدْ خَسِرَ الَّذِينَ قَتَلُوا أَوْلَادَهُمْ سَعًى  
بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ وَحَرَّمُوا مَا رَزَقَهُمُ اللَّهُ  
افْتِرَاءً عَلَى اللَّهِ ۖ  
قَدْ ضَلُّوا وَمَا كَانُوا مُهْتَدِينَ ٥

### SECTION 17

- 141 It is He who produceth<sup>964</sup>  
Gardens, with trellises  
And without, and dates,  
And tilth with produce  
Of all kinds, and olives  
And pomegranates,  
Similar (in kind)  
And different (in variety)<sup>965</sup>  
Eat of their fruit  
In their season, but render  
The dues that are proper  
On the day that the harvest  
Is gathered But waste not<sup>966</sup>  
By excess for God  
Loveth not the wasters

١٤٠- وَهُوَ الَّذِي أَنْتَا حَتَّىٰ مَعْرُوشَتِ  
وَعَمْرٍ مَعْرُوشَتِ وَالشَّجَرِ  
وَالزَّرْعِ مُخْلِفًا أُكْلَهُ وَالنَّيُّونَ  
وَالزَّمَانِ مُتَنَاسِلًا وَعَلَيْهِ مُتَشَابِهٌ  
كُلُّوا مِنْ ثَمَرِهِ إِذَا أَثْمَرَ  
وَأَتُوا حَقَّهُ يَوْمَ حَصَادِهِ ۖ  
وَلَا تُسْرِفُوا  
إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُسْرِفِينَ ٥

- 142 Of the cattle are some  
For burden and some for  
meat<sup>967</sup>

١٤١- وَمِنْ الْأَنْعَامِ حَمُولَةٌ وَفَرَشَاتٌ

964 *Ansha a* see vi 98 n 923

965 A beautiful passage with music to match the meaning Cf vi 99 and notes

966 Waste not want not says the English proverb Here the same wisdom is preached from a higher motive See what magnificent means God provides in nature for the sustenance of all His creatures because He loves them all Enjoy them in moderation and be grateful But commit no excess, and commit no waste the two things are the same from different angles of vision If you do, you take away something from other creatures and God would not like your selfishness

967 Superstition kills true religion We come back to the Arab Pagan superstitions about cattle for food The horse is not mentioned, because horse flesh was not an article of diet and there were no superstitions about it Sheep and goats camels and oxen were the usual sources of meat Sheep and goats were not used as beasts of burden but camels (of both sexes) were used for carrying burdens, and oxen for the plough, though cows were mainly used for milk and meat The words 'some for burden and some for meat' do not differentiate whole species, except that they give you the first two and the last two as categories



Eat what God hath provided  
For you, and follow not  
The footsteps of Satan  
For he is to you  
An avowed enemy

- 143 (Take) eight (head of cattle)<sup>968</sup>  
In (four) pairs  
Of sheep a pair,  
And of goats a pair,  
Say, hath He forbidden  
The two males,  
Or the two females,  
Or (the young) which the wombs  
Of the two females enclose?  
Tell me with knowledge  
If ye are truthful

- 144 Of camels a pair,  
And of oxen a pair,  
Say, hath He forbidden  
The two males,  
Or the two females,  
Or (the young) which the wombs  
Of the two females enclose?—  
Were ye present when God  
Ordered you such a thing?  
But who doth more wrong  
Than one who invents  
A lie against God,  
To lead astray men  
Without knowledge?  
For God guideth not  
People who do wrong

## SECTION 18

- 145 Say "I find not  
In the Message received  
By me by inspiration  
Any (meat) forbidden  
To be eaten by one  
Who wishes to eat it,  
Unless it be carrion,  
Or blood poured forth,"<sup>969</sup>

كُلُوا مِن مَّا رَزَقَكُمُ اللَّهُ  
وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا خُطُوَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ  
إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ ٥

١٣٣- ثَمِينَةَ أَزْوَاجٍ مِّنَ الضَّأْنِ الْأُنثَيْنِ  
وَمِنَ الْبَقَرِ اثْنَيْنِ  
قُلْ أَلَّذَكَرَيْنِ حَرَّمَ  
أَمْ الْأُنثَيَيْنِ  
أَمْ أَشْتَمَلْتُ عَلَيْهِ أَرْحَامُ الْأُنثَيَيْنِ  
يَتَّبِعُونِي بِعِلْمٍ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ٥

١٣٤- وَمِنَ الْإِبِلِ اثْنَيْنِ  
وَمِنَ الْبَقَرِ اثْنَيْنِ  
قُلْ أَلَّذَكَرَيْنِ حَرَّمَ أَمْ الْأُنثَيَيْنِ  
أَمْ أَشْتَمَلْتُ عَلَيْهِ أَرْحَامُ الْأُنثَيَيْنِ  
أَمْ كُنْتُمْ شُهَدَاءَ إِذْ وَضَعَكُمُ اللَّهُ فِيهِدًا  
فَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ افْتَرَى عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا  
لِّيُضِلَّ النَّاسَ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ  
إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ ٥

١٣٥- قُلْ لَا أَجِدُ فِي مَا أُوْحِيَ إِلَيَّ  
مُحَرَّمًا عَلَى طَاعِمٍ  
يُطْعَمُهُ إِلَّا أَنْ يَكُونَ مَيْتَةً أَوْ دَمًا  
مُسْفُوحًا

<sup>968</sup> The superstitions referred to in vi 139 and v 106 are further ridiculed in this verse and the next.

<sup>969</sup> *Blood poured forth* as distinguished from blood adhering to flesh, or the liver, or such other internal organs purifying the blood

Or the flesh of swine,—  
For it is an abomination—  
Or, what is impious, (meat)  
On which a name has been  
Invoked, other than God's "  
But (even so), if a person  
Is forced by necessity,  
Without wilful disobedience,  
Nor transgressing due limits,—  
Thy Lord is Oft-forgiving,  
Most Merciful

أَوْ لَحْمَ خنزِيرٍ  
وَأَنَّهُ رِجْسٌ أَوْ فِسْقًا  
أَهْلَ لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ بِهِ  
فَمَنِ اضْطُرَّ غَيْرَ بَاغٍ وَلَا عَادٍ  
فَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ٥

- 146 For those who followed  
The Jewish Law, We forbade  
Every (animal) with  
Undivided hoof,<sup>970</sup>  
And We forbade them  
The fat of the ox<sup>971</sup>  
And the sheep, except  
What adheres to their backs  
Or their entrails,  
Or is mixed up  
With a bone  
This in recompense  
For their wilful disobedience  
For We are True  
(In Our ordinances)

١٣٦- وَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ هَادُوا  
حَرَّمْنَا كُلَّ ذِي ظُفْرٍ  
وَمِنَ الْبَقَرِ وَالْغَنَمِ  
حَرَّمْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ شُحُومَهُمَا  
إِلَّا مَا حَمَلَتْ طُهُورُهُمَا  
أَوِ الْحَوَايَا أَوْ مَا اخْتَلَطَ بِعَظْمٍ  
ذَلِكَ جَزَاءُ نَفْسٍ بِبَعْضِهَا  
وَإِنَّا لَصَدِيقُونَ ٥

- 147 If they accuse thee  
Of falsehood, say  
" Your Lord is full  
Of mercy all-embracing,  
But from people in guilt  
Never will His wrath  
Be turned back

١٣٧- وَإِنْ كَذَّبُوكَ فَقُلْ رَبُّكُمْ  
دُورُ حِمْلَةٍ وَاسِعَةٍ  
وَلَا يُرَدُّ بَأْسُهُ عَنِ الْقَوْمِ الْمُجْرِمِينَ ٥

- 148 Those who give partners  
(To God) will say

١٣٨- سَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا

970 *Zufur* may mean claw or hoof, it is in the singular number, but as no animal has a single claw, and there is no point in a division of claws, we must look to a hoof for the correct interpretation. In the Jewish Law (Leviticus xi 36), "whatsoever parteth the hoof and is cloven footed, and cheweth the cud among the beasts" was lawful as food but the camel, the coney (rabbit) and the hare were not lawful because they do not divide the hoof. Undivided hoof" therefore is the correct interpretation. These three animals, unlawful to the Jews, are lawful in Islam Cf iv 160.

971 In Leviticus (vii 23) it is laid down that "ye shall eat no manner of fat, of ox, or of sheep or of goat." As regards the exceptions, it is to be noticed that priests were enjoined (Leviticus, vii 6 to eat of the fat in the trespass offering, which was considered holy, viz, the rump" (back and bone) "and the fat that covereth the inwards" (entrails), (Leviticus, vii 3)

" If God had wished,  
We should not have  
Given partners to Him,  
Nor would our fathers,  
Nor should we have had <sup>972</sup>  
Any taboos " So did  
Their ancestors argue  
Falsely, until they tasted  
Of Our wrath Say  
" Have ye any (certain)  
Knowledge? If so, produce  
It before us Ye follow  
Nothing but conjecture  
Ye do nothing but lie "

149 Say " With God is the  
argument <sup>973</sup>  
That reaches home if it had  
Been His Will, He could  
Indeed have guided you all "

150 Say " Bring forward your  
witnesses  
To prove that God did  
Forbid so and so " If they  
Bring such witnesses,  
Be not thou amongst them <sup>974</sup>  
Nor follow thou the vain  
Desires of such as treat  
Our Signs as falsehoods,  
And such as believe not  
In the Hereafter for they  
Hold others as equal  
With their Guardian-Lord <sup>975</sup>

لَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مَا أَشْرَكْنَا وَلَا آتَاؤُنَا  
وَلَا حَرَمْنَا مِنْ شَيْءٍ  
كَذَلِكَ كَذَّبَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ  
حَتَّى ذُاقُوا بَأْسَنَا  
مَنْ هَلْ عِنْدَكُمْ مِنْ عِلْمٍ فَتُخْرِجُوهُ لَنَا  
إِنْ تَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا الظَّنَّ  
وَلَا أَنْتُمْ أَنْتُمْ إِلَّا تَخْرُصُونَ ○

١٣٩- قُلْ فَوَلِّهِ أَجْمَعَةُ الْبَالِغَةُ  
فَلَوْ شَاءَ لَهَدَّكُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ○

١٥٠- قُلْ هَلْ شَهِدَ آءَ كُمْ  
الَّذِينَ يَشْهَدُونَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ حَرَّمَ هَذَا  
فَإِنْ شَهِدُوا فَلَا تَشْهَدْ مَعَهُمْ  
وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا  
وَالَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ  
وَهُمْ يَرِيَّهُمْ يَعْجِلُونَ ○

C 82 — God's commands are not irrational  
(vi 151 165) Taboos, but based on the moral law,  
And conformable to reason His Way

972 As used by the Pagans the argument is false for it implies (a) that men have no personal responsibility (b) that they are the victims of a Determinism against which they are helpless and (c) that they might therefore go on doing just what they liked It is also inconsistent for if (c) is true (c) cannot be true Nor is it meant to be taken seriously

973 On the other hand the argument cuts true and deep, as from God to His creatures God is Omnipotent, and can do all that we can conceive But He in His Plan, has given man some responsibility and some choice in order to train man's will If man fails he is helped in various ways by God's mercy and grace But man cannot go on sinning, and in a state of sin, expect God to be pleased with him (vi 147)

974 The Pagan superstitions were of course baseless, and in many cases harmful and debasing, If God's name was taken as supporting them no true man of God could be taken in, or join in support simply because God's name was taken in vain

975 Cf vi 1 God, who created and who cherishes and cares for all, should have the first claim on our attention Those who set up false gods fail to understand God's true governance or their own true destiny

Is the straight Way, of justice and truth  
In unity and faith must we dedicate  
All our life to His service, and His  
Alone, to Whom we shall return

## SECTION 19

- 151 Say "Come, I will rehearse  
What God hath (really) <sup>976</sup>  
Prohibited you from" join not  
Anything as equal with Him,  
Be good to your parents,  
Kill not your children  
On a plea of want, — We  
Provide sustenance for you  
And for them, — come not  
Nigh to shameful deeds,  
Whether open or secret,  
Take not life, which God  
Hath made sacred, except  
By way of justice and law <sup>977</sup>  
Thus doth He command you,  
That ye may learn wisdom

- 152 And come not nigh  
To the orphan's property,  
Except to improve it,  
Until he attain the age  
Of full strength, give measure  
And weight with (full) justice, —  
No burden do We place  
On any soul, but that  
Which it can bear, —  
Whatever ye say, speak justly,

١٥١- قُلْ تَعَالَوْا أَنِزِلْ مَا حَرَّمَ رَبِّي عَلَيْكُمْ  
أَلَّا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا  
وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا  
وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ مِنْ إِمْلَاقٍ  
نَحْنُ نَرْزُقُكُمْ وَإِيَّاهُمْ وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا  
الْفَوَاحِشَ مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطَنَ  
وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا النَّفْسَ الَّتِي حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ  
ذَلِكَ وَضَعَتْهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ○

١٥٢- وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا مَالَ الْيَتِيمِ  
إِلَّا بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ حَتَّىٰ يَبْلُغَ أَشُدَّهُ  
وَأَوْفُوا الْكَيْلَ وَالْمِيزَانَ بِالْقِسْطِ  
لَا تُكَلِّفُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا  
وَلِذَا قُلْتُمْ فَاعْدُوا

976 Instead of following Pagan superstitions and being in constant terror of imaginary taboos and prohibitions we should study the true moral law whose sanction is God's Law. The first step is that we should recognise that He is the One and Only Lord and Cherisher. The mention of goodness to parents immediately afterwards suggests (1) that God's love of us and care for us may—on an infinitely higher plane—be understood by our ideal of parental love which is purely unselfish, (2) that our first duty among our fellow creatures is to our father and mother whose love leads us to the conception of divine love. Arising from that is the conception of our converse duties to our children. God provides sustenance (material and spiritual) not only for us but for them, hence any custom like the Pagan custom of sacrificing children to Moloch stands condemned. Then come the moral prohibitions against lewdness and all unseemly acts relating to sex or otherwise open or secret. This is followed by the prohibition of killing or fighting. All these things are conformable to our own interests, and therefore true wisdom from our own point of view.

977 For the comprehensive word *haqq* I have used the two words "justice and law" other significations implied are right truth, what is becoming etc. It is not only that human life is sacred, but all life is sacred. Even in killing animals for food, a dedicatory formula "in the name of God" has to be employed, to make it lawful see n 698 to v 5, and n 962 to vi 138.

Even if a near relative  
Is concerned, and fulfil  
The Covenant of God <sup>978</sup>  
Thus doth He command you,  
That ye may remember

- 153 Verily, this is My Way,  
Leading straight follow it  
Follow not (other) paths  
They will scatter you about  
From His (great) Path  
Thus doth He command you,  
That ye may be righteous <sup>979</sup>

- 154 Moreover, We gave Moses  
The Book, completing  
(Our favour) to those  
Who would do right,  
And explaining all things <sup>980</sup>  
In detail,—and a guide  
And a mercy, that they  
Might believe in the meeting  
With their Lord

#### SECTION 20.

- 155 And this is a Book  
Which We have revealed  
As a blessing so follow it <sup>981</sup>  
And do right, that ye  
May receive mercy

- 156 Lest ye should say  
"The Book was revealed  
To two Peoples before us,  
And for our part, we  
Remained unacquainted <sup>981</sup>

وَلَوْ كَانَ ذَا قُرْبَىٰ  
وَبِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ أَوفُوا  
ذَلِكُمْ وَضَعْنَا بِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ ٥

١٥٣- وَأَنَّ هَذَا صِرَاطٌ مُسْتَقِيمٌ فَاتَّبِعُوهُ  
وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا السُّبُلَ فَتَفَرَّقَ بِكُمْ عَنْ  
سَبِيلِهِ  
ذَلِكُمْ وَضَعْنَا بِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ٥

١٥٤- ثُمَّ آتَيْنَا مُوسَى الْكِتَابَ تَمَامًا  
عَلَى الَّذِي أَحْسَنَ  
وَتَفْصِيلًا لِّكُلِّ شَيْءٍ  
وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً  
لَّعَلَّهُمْ يُلَاقُوا رَبَّهُمْ يُؤْمِنُونَ ٥

١٥٥- وَهَذَا كِتَابُنَا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ مُبَارَكٌ فَاتَّبِعُوهُ  
وَاتَّقُوا لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ٥

١٥٦- أَنْ تَقُولُوا إِنَّمَا أَنْزَلَ الْكِتَابَ عَلَى  
طَائِفَتَيْنِ مِنْ قَبْلِنَا وَإِنْ كُنَّا عَنْ

978 Cf v 1 and n 682

979 Note again the triple refrain with variations, in vi 151 152 and 153 In verse 151 we have the moral law which it is for our own good to follow Thus doth He command you that ye may learn wisdom In verse 152 we have to deal justly and rightly with others we are apt to think too much of ourselves and forget others Thus doth He command you that ye may remember In verse 153 our attention is called to the Straight Way the Way of God the only Way th it leads to righteousness Thus doth He command you that ye may be righteous

980 The revelation to Moses went into the details of people's lives and thus served as a practical guide to the Jews and after them to the Christians Admittedly the Message delivered by Christ dealt with general principles only and in no way with details The message of Islām as in the Qurān is the next complete guide in point of time after that of Moses

981 Because the diligent studies of the earlier People of the Book were in languages foreign to the new People of Islām, or because they were meant for circumstances different from those of the new world after Islām

With all that they learned  
By assiduous study , ”

- 157 Or lest ye should say  
“ If the Book had only  
Been revealed to us,  
We should have followed  
Its guidance better than they ”  
Now then hath come  
Unto you a Clear (Sign) <sup>982</sup>  
From your Lord,—and a guide  
And a mercy then who  
Could do more wrong  
Than one who rejecteth  
God's Signs, and turneth  
Away therefrom ? In good time  
Shall we requite those  
Who turn away from Our Signs,  
With a dreadful penalty,  
For their turning away

- 158 Are they waiting to see  
If the angels come to them,  
Or thy Lord (Himself),  
Or certain of the Signs  
Of thy Lord !  
The day that certain  
Of the Signs of thy Lord  
Do come, no good  
Will it do to a soul <sup>983</sup>  
To believe in them then,  
If it believed not before  
Nor earned righteousness  
Through its Faith Say  
“ Wait ye we too  
Are waiting ” <sup>984</sup>

دَرَّاسْتِهِمْ لَغَوِلِينَ ۝

١٥٧- أَوْ تَقُولُوا لَوْ أَنَّا أُنْزِلَ عَلَيْنَا الْكِتَابُ  
لَكُنَّا أَهْدَىٰ مِنْهُمْ  
فَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ بَيِّنَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ  
وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةٌ  
مَّنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ كَذَبَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ  
وَصَدَفَ عَنْهَا  
سَنَجْزِي الَّذِينَ يَصْدِفُونَ عَنْ آيَاتِنَا  
سُوءَ الْعَذَابِ بِمَا كَانُوا يَصْدِفُونَ ۝

١٥٨- هَلْ يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ تَأْتِيَهُمُ  
الْمَلَائِكَةُ أَوْ يَأْتِيَ رَبُّكَ  
أَوْ يَأْتِيَ بَعْضُ آيَاتِ رَبِّكَ  
يَوْمَ يَأْتِيَ بَعْضُ آيَاتِ رَبِّكَ  
لَا يَنْفَعُهُمْ نَفْسًا إِيْمَانُهَا  
لَمْ تَكُنْ أَمَنَتْ مِنْ قَبْلُ  
أَوْ كَسَبَتْ فِي إِيمَانِهَا خَيْرًا  
قُلْ انْتَظِرُوا إِنَّا مُنْتَظِرُونَ ۝

982 The Quran and the life and the teaching of Muḥammad the Apostle of God

983 There is no merit in faith in things that you are compelled to acknowledge when they actually happen Faith is belief in things which you do not see with your eyes but you understand with your spiritual sense if your whole will consents to it it results in deeds of righteousness which are the evidence of your faith

984 The waiting in the two cases is in quite different senses the foolish man without faith is waiting for things which will not happen and is surprised by the real things which do happen , the righteous man of faith is waiting for the fruits of righteousness, of which he has an assured hope in a higher state of spiritual elevation, even the fruits have no personal meaning to him, for God is to him all in all vi 162

159 As for those who divide <sup>985</sup>  
 Their religion and break up  
 Into sects, thou hast  
 No part in them in the least  
 Their affair is with God  
 He will in the end  
 Tell them the truth  
 Of all that they did

١٥٩- إِنْ الَّذِينَ فَتَرُوا دِينَهُمْ وَكَانُوا شِيعًا  
 لَسْتُ مِنْهُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ  
 إِنَّمَا أَمْرُهُمْ إِلَى اللَّهِ  
 ثُمَّ يُنَبِّئُهُم بِمَا كَانُوا يَفْعَلُونَ ۝

160 He that doeth good  
 Shall have ten times  
 As much to his credit  
 He that doeth evil  
 Shall be recompensed  
 According to his evil <sup>986</sup>  
 No wrong shall be done  
 Unto (any of) them

١٦٠- مَنْ جَاءَ بِالْحَسَنَةِ فَلَهُ عَشْرُ امْتِلَافٍ  
 وَمَنْ جَاءَ بِالسَّيِّئَةِ  
 فَلَا يُجْزَى إِلَّا مِثْلُهَا  
 وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ۝

161 Say "Verily, my Lord  
 Hath guided me to  
 A Way that is straight,—  
 A religion of right,—  
 The Path (trod) by Abraham  
 The true in faith,  
 And he (certainly)  
 Joined not gods with God "

١٦١- قُلْ إِنِّي هَدَىٰ رَبِّي إِلَىٰ صِرَاطٍ  
 مُسْتَقِيمٍ دِينًا قِيمًا  
 قَمَلَةً إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا  
 وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ۝

162 Say "Truly, my prayer  
 And my service of sacrifice,  
 My life and my death,  
 Are (all) for God,  
 The Cherisher of the Worlds

١٦٢- قُلْ إِنْ صَلَاتِي وَنُسُكِي  
 وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي  
 لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ۝

163 No partner hath He  
 This am I taught,  
 And I am the first  
 Of those who bow  
 To His Will

١٦٣- لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ  
 وَبِذَلِكَ أُمِرْتُ  
 وَأَنَا أَوَّلُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ ۝

164 Say "Shall I seek  
 For (my) Cherisher

١٦٤- قُلْ أَغَيْرَ اللَّهِ أَبْغِي رَبًّا

985 *Divide their religion farraqū* : e (1) make a distinction between one part of it and another take the part which suits them and reject the rest, or (2) have religion one day of the week and the world the rest of the six days or (3) keep religion in its right place " as if it did not claim to govern the whole life, make a sharp distinction between the secular and the religious, or (4) show a sectarian bias seek differences in views so as to break up the unity of Islam

986 God is just as well as generous To the good the reward is multiplied ten times (: e far above merits) on account of His generosity To the evil, the punishment is no more than commensurate with their sin, and even so the door of mercy is always open to those who sincerely repent and show it by their conduct

Other than God,  
When He is the Cherisher  
Of all things (that exist) ?  
Every soul draws the meed  
Of its acts on none <sup>987</sup>  
But itself no bearer  
Of burdens can bear  
The burden of another  
Your goal in the end  
Is towards God He will tell  
You the truth of the things  
Wherein ye disputed "

وَهُوَ رَبُّ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ  
وَلَا تَكْسِبُ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ إِلَّا عَلَيْهَا  
وَلَا تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٌ وِزْرَ أُخْرَى  
ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُمْ تُرْجَعُونَ  
فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ

165 It is He Who hath made  
You (His) agents, inheritors <sup>988</sup>  
Of the earth He hath raised  
You in ranks, some above  
Others that He might try  
You in the gifts ye receive  
For thy Lord is quick  
In punishment yet He  
Is indeed Oft-forgiving,  
Most Merciful

۱۶۵- وَهُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَكُمْ خَلَائِفَ الْأَرْضِ  
وَرَفَعَ بَعْضَكُمْ فَوْقَ بَعْضٍ دَرَجَاتٍ  
لِّيَبْلُوَكُمْ فِي مَا آتَاكُمْ  
إِنَّ رَبَّكَ سَرِيعُ الْعِقَابِ  
وَإِنَّهُ لَغَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ



987 The doctrine of personal responsibility again We are fully responsible for our acts ourselves we cannot transfer the consequences to some one else Nor can any one vicariously atone for our sins If people have honest doubts or differences about important questions of religion, they should not start futile disputes All will be clear in the end Our duty here is to maintain unity and discipline and do the duty that comes to us

988 Cf ii 30 and n, where I have translated *Khalifa* "as 'Vicegerent', it being God's Plan to make Adam (as representing mankind) His vicegerent on earth In C 1 I have construed the same word by the word 'Agent' Another idea implied in '*Khalifa*' is that of 'successor heir or inheritor' : i.e. one who has the ultimate ownership after the present possessors, to whom a life tenancy has been given by the owner have passed away In xv 23 occurs the striking word 'heirs' (*wārithūn*) as applied to God We give life and death and We are the Heirs (or Inheritors)" The same idea occurs in iii 180 where see n 485 The translation here attempts to express both the ideas which I understand from the original



( INTRODUCTION SURA VII (*A'rāf*)

This Sūra is closely connected, both chronologically and in respect of the argument, with the previous Sūra. But it expounds the doctrine of revelation and man's spiritual history by illustrations from Adam onwards, through various Prophets, and the details of Moses's struggles, to the time of the Apostle Muhammad, in whom God's revelation is completed.

*Summary*

The note, "learn from the past," is struck from the very beginning. The opposition of Evil to Good is illustrated by the story of Adam and Iblīs. Arrogance leads to rebellion, the rebel is jealous and tempts the natural man, who is warned against deceit and all excess (vii 1-31, and C 83).

If the warning is not heeded, the future penalties are indicated, while the privileges and the bliss and peace of the righteous are shown in a picture of the Hereafter, as well as in the power and goodness of God in the world that we see around us (vii 32-58, and C 84).

The story of Noah and the Flood, and the stories of Hūd, Sālih, Lot, and Shu'aib, all point to the lesson that the Prophets were resisted and rejected, but truth triumphed in the end, and evil was humbled, for God's Plan never fails (vii 59-99, and C 85).

The story of Moses is told in greater detail, not only in his struggles with Pharaoh, but in his preparation for his mission, and his struggles with his own rebellious people. Even from the time of Moses the coming of the unlettered Apostle was foreshadowed (vii 100-157, and C 86).

But the people of Moses frequently lapsed from God's Law as promulgated to them, and transgressed God's Covenant, and they were scattered through the earth in sections (vii 158-171, and C 87).

The children of Adam have multiplied, but many of them have rejected truth and go by degrees to destruction in ways that they do not realise. The righteous listen to the Message of God, and serve Him in humility (vii 172-206, and C 88).

C 83 — Revelation should ease the difficulties  
(vii 1-31) Of heart and mind, for it tells

The story of man's spiritual past,  
And teaches the end of good and evil  
Iblīs fell from jealousy and arrogance,  
And Adam fell because he listened  
To his deceit. But God did grant  
In His Mercy gifts and guidance  
To men, warned them against excess,  
And taught them moderation and justice

## Sūra VII

## A'raf, or The Heights

*In the name of God, Most Gracious,  
Most Merciful*

1 **Alif, Lam, Mim, Sād** <sup>989</sup>

2 **A** Book revealed unto thee,—  
So let thy heart be oppressed <sup>990</sup>  
No more by any difficulty  
On that account,—  
That with it thou mightest  
Warn (the erring) and teach  
The Believers

3 Follow (oh men!) the revelation  
Given unto you from your Lord,  
And follow not, as friends  
Or protectors, other than Him  
Little it is ye understand <sup>991</sup>

4 **How** many towns have We  
Destroyed (for their sins)?  
Our punishment took them  
On a sudden by night  
Or while they slept  
For their afternoon rest



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

١- اَلتَّصَّ

٢- كَتَبْتُ اَنْزِلَ اِلَيْكَ  
فَلَا يَكُنْ فِي صَدْرِكَ حَرَجٌ مِنْهُ  
لِتُنْذِرَ بِهِ  
وَذِكْرًا لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ

٣- اَتَّبِعُوا مَا اُنْزِلَ اِلَيْكُمْ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ  
وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا مِنْ دُونِهِ اَوْلِيَاءَ  
قَلِيلًا مَّا تَذَكَّرُونَ

٤- وَكَمْ مِنْ قَرْيَةٍ اَهْلَكْنَاهَا  
فَعَاءَهَا بَاْسُنَا سَيَّئًا  
اَوْ هُمْ قَاْمِلُونَ

<sup>989</sup> This is a combination of four Abbreviated Letters. For Abbreviated Letters generally, see Appendix I (at the end of Sūra II). The combination here includes the three letters A L M which occurred at the beginning of Sūra II and are discussed in n 25 to 27.

The additional letter Sād occurs in combination here and in Sūra XIX and by itself at the beginning of S XXXVIII and nowhere else. The factor common to S VII, S XIX and S XXXVIII is that in each case the core of the Sūra consists in the stories (qisas) of the Prophets. In this Sūra we have the stories of Noah, Hud, Sālih, Lot, Shu'aib and Moses, leading up to Muhammad and in S XXXVIII the stories of David, Solomon, and Job similarly lead up to Muhammad occupying three out of the five sections. Sūra XIX consists almost entirely of such stories. Can we understand Sād to stand for qisas of which it is the most characteristic letter? In this Sūra VII we have also the spiritual history of mankind traced—the Beginning, the Middle, and the End which as explained in n 25 might be represented symbolically by A L M. If so this Sūra, dealing with the Beginning, Middle and End of man's spiritual story and illustrating it by the stories of the Prophets, might well be represented symbolically by the letters *Alif Lām, Mīm, Sād*. But no one can be dogmatic about these symbols. We must accept them as symbols with a mystic meaning.

<sup>990</sup> *Heart* in the original *breast*. I have used the word most appropriate to the English idiom. The meaning is that Mustafa is consoled for all the difficulties which he encountered in his mission, with the fact that he had clear guidance in the Book for his preaching.

<sup>991</sup> This is added in order that men might not be puffed up with such little knowledge as they possessed, for there are great heights to be scaled in the spiritual kingdom.

- 5 When (thus) Our punishment  
Took them, no cry  
Could they utter but this  
"Indeed we did wrong" <sup>992</sup>
- 6 When shall we question  
Those to whom Our Message  
Was sent and those by whom <sup>993</sup>  
We sent it
- 7 We shall recount  
Their whole story  
With knowledge, for We  
Were never absent  
(At any time or place) <sup>994</sup>
- 8 The balance that day  
Will be true (to a nicety)  
Those whose scale (of good)  
Will be heavy, will prosper
- 9 Those whose scale will be light,  
Will find their souls  
In perdition, for that they  
Wrongfully rejected Our Signs
- 10 It is We Who have  
Placed you with authority  
On earth, and provided  
You therein with means  
For the fulfilment of your life <sup>995</sup>  
Small are the thanks  
That ye give !

ه-فَمَا كَانَ دَعْوَاهُمْ إِذْ جَاءَهُمْ بَأْسُنَا  
إِلَّا أَنْ قَالُوا إِنَّا كُنَّا ظَالِمِينَ ○

٦-فَلَنَسْأَلَنَّ الَّذِينَ أُرْسِلَ إِلَيْهِمْ  
وَلَنَسْأَلَنَّ الْمُرْسَلِينَ ○

٧-فَلَنَقُصِّعَ عَلَيْهِمْ يُوعَى  
وَمَا كُنَّا غَائِبِينَ ○

٨-وَالْوِزْنُ يَوْمَئِذٍ الْحَقُّ فَمَنْ ثَقُلَتْ  
مَوَازِينُهُ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ○

٩-وَمَنْ خَفَّتْ مَوَازِينُهُ فَأُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ  
حَسِرُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ يَمَّا كَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا يِظْلَمُونَ ○

١٠-وَلَقَدْ مَكَّنَّاكُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ  
وَجَعَلْنَا لَكُمْ فِيهَا مَعَالِشَ  
فَلْيَلَا مَا تَشْكُرُونَ ○

992 The spiritual story of man begins with a prelude Think of the towns and nations ruined by their iniquity God gave them many opportunities, and sent them warners and teachers But they arrogantly went on in their evil ways, till some dreadful calamity came like a thief in the night and wiped out their traces In a warm climate the disturbance in the heat of the midday rest is even more than the disturbance at night It was when the catastrophe came that the people realised their sins, but it was too late

993 In the final reckoning the warners and teachers will give evidence of their preaching the truth, and the wicked will themselves have to acknowledge the truth We picture it like a court scene, when the story is related but the Judge knows all even more than the parties can tell

994 God is never absent from any place or at any time, for Time and Place are relative conceptions for our limited natures, while He is the Absolute, independent of such relative conceptions

995 That is, all the material things which are necessary to sustain beautify, and refine life, as well as all those powers faculties, and opportunities which are instrumental in bringing up life to a higher plane and preparing man for his high spiritual destiny

## SECTION 2

- 11 It is We Who created you  
And gave you shape,<sup>996</sup>  
Then We bade the angels  
Bow down to Adam, and they  
Bowed down, not so Iblis  
He refused to be of those<sup>997</sup>  
Who bow down

۱۱- وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَاكُمْ ثُمَّ صَوَّرْنَاكُمْ  
ثُمَّ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ اسْجُدُوا لِآدَمَ  
فَسَجَدُوا إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ  
لَمْ يَكُنْ مِنَ السَّاجِدِينَ ○

- 12 (God) said "What prevented  
Thee from bowing down  
When I commanded thee?"  
He said "I am better  
Than he Thou didst create  
Me from fire, and him from clay"<sup>998</sup>

۱۲- قَالَ مَا مَنَعَكَ أَلَّا تَسْجُدَ إِذْ أَمَرْتُكَ  
قَالَ أَنَا خَيْرٌ مِنْهُ  
خَلَقْتَنِي مِنْ نَارٍ وَخَلَقْتَهُ مِنْ طِينٍ ○

- 13 (God) said "Get thee down  
From this<sup>999</sup> it is not  
For thee to be arrogant  
Here get out, for thou  
Art of the meanest (of creatures)"

۱۳- قَالَ فَاهْبِطْ مِنْهَا  
فَمَا يَكُونُ لَكَ أَنْ تَتَكَبَّرَ فِيهَا  
فَاخْرُجْ إِنَّكَ مِنَ الصَّاغِرِينَ ○

- 14 He said "Give me respite  
Till the day they are  
Raised up"

۱۴- قَالَ أَنْظِرْنِي  
إِلَى يَوْمٍ يُبْعَثُونَ ○

- 15 (God) said "Be thou  
Among those who have respite"<sup>1000</sup>

۱۵- قَالَ إِنَّكَ مِنَ الْمُنظَرِينَ ○

996 *Shape* or form must be interpreted not only to refer to the physical form which changes day by day but also the various forms or shapes which our ideal and spiritual existence may take from time to time according to our inner experiences (cf. LXIII 8). The original form or idea or pattern according to Plato's mystic doctrine as developed in his *Republic* may also be compared with the names or nature and quality of things which God taught Adam Q. II 31 and n. 48 and VI 94 n. 916. It was after Adam (as standing for all mankind) had been so taught that the angels were asked to bow down to him for by God's grace his status had actually been raised higher. Note the transition from *you* (plural) in the first clause to *Adam* in the second clause. Adam and mankind are synonymous: the plural is reverted to in VII 14-16 18.

997 Iblis not only refused to bow down: he refused to be of those who bowed down. In other words he arrogantly despised the angels who bowed down, as well as man to whom they bowed down and he was in rebellion against God for not obeying His order. Arrogance, jealousy, and rebellion were his triple crime.

998 Notice the subtle wiles of Iblis: his egotism in putting himself above man and his falsehood in ignoring the fact that God had not merely made man's body from clay but had given him spiritual form—in other words had taught him the nature of things and raised him above the angels.

999 *This* "the situation as it was then—a rebellious creature impertinent to His Creator. At every step Iblis falls lower: arrogance, jealousy, disobedience, egotism and untruth.

1000 Are there others under respite? Yes Iblis has a large army of wicked seducers and those men who are their dupes. For though degradation takes effect at once, its appearance may be long delayed.

16 He said " Because thou  
Hast thrown me out <sup>1001</sup>  
Of the Way, lo! I will  
Lie in wait for them  
On Thy Straight Way

١٦- قَالَ فِيمَا أَعْوَيْتَنِي  
لَأَقْعُدَنَّ لَهُمْ صِرَاطَكَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ ۝

17 " Then will I assault them  
From before them and behind them,  
From their right and their left  
Nor wilt Thou find,  
In most of them,  
Gratitude (for Thy mercies) " <sup>1002</sup>

١٧- ثُمَّ لَا يَتَبَوَّأُهُمْ مِنْ بَيْنِ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَ  
مِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ وَعَنْ أَيْمَانِهِمْ وَعَنْ  
شَمَائِلِهِمْ وَلَا تَجِدُ أَكْثَرَهُمْ شَاكِرِينَ ۝

18 (God) said " Get out  
From this, disgraced  
And expelled If any  
Of them follow thee,—  
Hell will I fill  
With you all

١٨- قَالَ اخْرُجْ مِنْهَا مَذْذُورًا  
لَسَنْ تَبْعَكَ مِنْهُمْ  
لَأَمْلَأَنَّ جَهَنَّمَ مِنْكُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ۝

19 " <sup>1003</sup> Oh Adam ! dwell thou  
And thy wife in the Garden,  
and enjoy <sup>1004</sup> (its good things)  
As ye wish but approach not  
This tree, or ye run  
Into harm and transgression "

١٩- وَلَا تَاْمُرَا سَكُنْ أَنْتَ وَزَوْجُكَ الْجَنَّةَ  
فَكُلَا مِنْ حَيْثُ شِئْتُمَا وَلَا تَقْرَبَا هَذِهِ  
الشَّجَرَةَ فَتَكُونَا مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ ۝

20 Then began Satan <sup>1005</sup> to whisper  
Suggestions to them, bringing  
Openly before their minds  
All their shame <sup>1006</sup>

٢٠- فَوَسَّوَسَ لَهُمَا الشَّيْطَانُ لِيُبْدِيَ  
لَهُمَا مَا وَرَىٰ عَنْهُمَا مِنْ سَوَاتِهِمَا

1001 Another instance of Iblis's subtlety and falsehood. He waits till he gets the respite. Then he breaks out into a lie and impudent defiance. The lie is in suggesting, that God had thrown him out of the Way in other words misled him where his own conduct was responsible for his degradation. The defiance is in his setting snares on the Straight Way to which God directs men. Iblis now falls a step lower than the five steps mentioned in n. 999. His sixth step is defiance.

1002 The assault of evil is from all sides. It takes advantage of every weak point and some times even our good and generous sympathies are used to decoy us into the snares of evil. Man has every reason to be grateful to God for all His loving care and yet man in his folly forgets his gratitude and does the very opposite of what he should do.

1003 Now the story turns to man. He was placed in a spiritual Garden of innocence and bliss but it was God's Plan to give him a limited faculty of choice. All that he was forbidden to do was to approach the Tree of Evil but he succumbed to Satan's suggestions.

1004 I enjoy literally 'eat'. Cf. the meaning of *ja'ama* in vi. 14 n. 847 and *akala* in v. 69 n. 776.

1005 The transition from the name Iblis to the name Satan is similar to that in ii. 36 where it is explained in n. 52.

1006 Our first parents as created by God (and this applies to all of us) were innocent in matters material as well as spiritual. They knew no evil. But the faculty of choice, which was given to them and which raised them above the angels also implied that they had the capacity of evil, which by the training of their own will, they were to reject. They were warned of the danger. When they fell, they realised the evil. They were (and we are) still given the chance, in this life on a lower plane, to make good and recover the lost status of innocence and bliss.

That was hidden from them  
(Before) he said " Your Lord  
Only forbade you this tree,  
Lest ye should become angels  
Or such beings as live for ever "

- 21 And he swore to them  
Both, that he was  
Their sincere adviser

- 22 So by deceit he brought about  
Their fall when they  
Tasted of the tree,  
Their shame became manifest  
To them, and they began  
To sew together the leaves  
Of the Garden over their bodies  
And their Lord called  
Unto them " Did I not  
Forbid you that tree,  
And tell you that Satan  
Was an avowed  
Enemy unto you ? "

- 23 They said " Our Lord !  
We have wronged our own souls  
If Thou forgive us not  
And bestow not upon us  
Thy Mercy, we shall  
Certainly be lost "

- 24 (God) said " Get ye down,  
With enmity between yourselves  
On earth will be your  
dwelling-place  
And your means of livelihood,—  
For a time "

- 25 He said " Therein shall ye  
Live, and therein shall ye  
Die, but from it shall ye  
Be taken out (at last) " <sup>1007</sup>

وَقَالَ مَا نَهَاكُمَا رَبُّكُمَا عَنْ هَذِهِ  
الشَّجَرَةِ إِلَّا أَنْ تَكُونَا مَلَكَتَيْنِ أَوْ تَكُونَا  
مِنَ الْخَالِدِينَ ○

٢١- وَقَاسَاهُمَا إِنْ لَكُمْ مِنَ  
النُّصَاحِينَ ○

٢٢- قَدْ لَهُمَا بِعُورٍ فَلَمَّا ذَاقَا الشَّجَرَةَ  
بَدَتْ لَهُمَا سَوْآتُهُمَا  
وَطَفِقَا يَخْصِفْنَ عَلَيْهِمَا مِنْ ذَرْقِ  
الْجَنَّةِ ○

وَنَادَاهُمَا رَبُّهُمَا  
أَلَمْ أَنْهَكُمَا عَنْ تِلْكَ الشَّجَرَةِ وَأَقُلَّ  
لَكُمَا إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُبِينٌ ○

٢٣- قَالَا رَبَّنَا ظَلَمْنَا أَنْفُسَنَا  
وَإِنْ لَمْ تَغْفِرْ لَنَا وَتَرْحَمْنَا  
لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ ○

٢٤- قَالَ اهْبِطُوا بَعْضُكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ  
وَلَكُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ مُسْتَقَرٌّ  
وَمَتَاعٌ إِلَىٰ حِينٍ ○

٢٥- قَالَ فِيهَا تَحْيَوْنَ وَفِيهَا تَمُوتُونَ  
وَمِنْهَا تُخْرَجُونَ ○

٤

1007 Cf this whole passage about Adam with the passage in II 30 39 and with other passages in subsequent Sūras. In places the words are precisely the same and yet the whole argument is different. In each case it exactly fits the context. In S II the argument was about the origin of man. Here the argument is a prelude to his history on earth and so it continues logically in the next section to address the Children of Adam, and goes on afterwards with the story of the various apostles that came to guide mankind. Truth is one, but its apt presentment in human words shows a different facet in different contexts.

## SECTION 3

- 26 **Oh** ye Children of Adam !  
 We have bestowed raiment <sup>1008</sup>  
 Upon you to cover  
 Your shame, as well as  
 Be an adornment to you  
 But the raiment of  
 righteousness,—  
 That is the best  
 Such are among the Signs  
 Of God, that ye  
 May celebrate His praise !

- 27 Oh ye Children of Adam !  
 Let not Satan seduce you,  
 In the same manner as <sup>1009</sup>  
 He got your parents out  
 Of the Garden, stripping them  
 Of their raiment, to expose  
 Their shame for he  
 And his tribe watch you  
 From a position where ye  
 Cannot see them We made  
 The Evil Ones friends  
 (Only) to those without Faith

- 28 **When** they do aught  
 That is shameful, they say  
 " We found our fathers  
 Doing so ", and " God  
 Commanded us thus "  
 Say " Nay, God never

٢٦- لَبِئْسَ الَّذِي آدَمَ قَدْ أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكُمْ لِبَاسًا  
 يُؤَارِي سَوَاتِكُمْ وَرَيْشًا  
 وَلِبَاسُ التَّقْوَى  
 ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ  
 ذَلِكَ مِنْ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ  
 لَعَلَّهُمْ يَذَّكَّرُونَ ○

٢٧- لَبِئْسَ الَّذِي آدَمَ لَا يَفْتِنُكُمْ الشَّيْطَانُ  
 كَمَا أَخْرَجَ آبَاكُمْ مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ  
 يَنْزِعُ عَنْهُمَا لِبَاسَهُمَا لِيُرِيَهُمَا سَوَاتِهِمَا  
 إِنَّهُ يَرَاكُمْ هُوَ وَقَبِيلُهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا  
 تَرَوْنَهُمْ إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا الشَّيَاطِينَ أَوْلِيَاءَ  
 لِلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ○

٢٨- وَإِذَا فَعَلُوا فَاحِشَةً  
 قَالُوا وَحَدَّثْنَا عَلَيْهَا آبَاءُنَا  
 وَاللَّهُ أَمَرْنَا بِهَا قُلْ إِنْ اللَّهُ لَا يَأْمُرُ

1008 There is a double philosophy of clothes here to correspond with the double signification of verse 20 above as explained in n 1006. Spiritually God created man 'bare and alone' (vi 94) the soul in its naked purity and beauty knew no shame because it knew no guilt after it was touched by guilt and soiled by evil its thoughts and deeds became its clothing and adornments: good or bad honest or meretricious according to the inner motives which gave them colour. So in the case of the body it is pure and beautiful as long as it is not defiled by misuse: its clothing and ornaments may be good or meretricious according to the motives in the mind and character: if good they are the symbols of purity and beauty but the best clothing and ornament we could have comes from righteousness which covers the nakedness of sin and adorns us with virtues. In secular literature the philosophy of clothes is the theme of Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus* but it is strong meat to the novice in literature.

1009 That is by fraud and deceit—by putting you off your guard and telling lies. Adam's story here becomes an introduction to the later spiritual history of mankind vii 20 22. In the Garden Satan's deceit stripped off their raiment of honour and innocence. In this life on a lower plane he seeks to strip us of the raiment of righteousness. And he can take up positions on a vantage ground of worldly power or influence or riches, in which he and his confederates are not seen in their true colours. They may assume a fair seeming disguise of disinterested friendship or high motives of patriotism or public spirit or loyalty to ancestors, when beneath it there is nothing but spite and selfishness.

Commands what is shameful  
Do ye say of God  
What ye know not ? ”

- 29 Say “ My Lord hath commanded  
Justice , and that ye set  
Your whole selves (to Him) <sup>1010</sup>  
At every time and place  
Of prayer, and call upon Him,  
Making your devotion sincere  
As in His sight  
Such as He created you <sup>1011</sup>  
In the beginning, so  
Shall ye return ”

- 30 Some He hath guided  
Others have (by their choice)  
Deserved the loss of their way , <sup>1012</sup>  
In that they took  
The Evil Ones, in preference  
To God, for their friends  
And protectors, and think  
That they receive guidance

- 31 Oh Children of Adam !  
Wear your beautiful apparel <sup>1013</sup>  
At every time and place  
Of prayer eat and drink  
But waste not by excess,  
For God loveth not the wasters

بِالْحَشَاءِ  
أَتَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ  
٢٩- قُلْ أَمَرَ رَبِّي بِالْقِسْطِ  
وَأَقِيمُوا وُجُوهَكُمْ  
عِندَ كُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ  
وَادْعُوهُ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ ه  
كَمَا بَدَأَكُمْ تَعُودُونَ ٥

٣٠- فَرِيقًا هَدَىٰ وَفَرِيقًا حَقَّ عَلَيْهِمُ  
الضَّلَالَةُ إِنَّهُمْ اتَّخَذُوا الشَّيَاطِينَ  
أَوْلِيَاءَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ  
وَيَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُمْ مُّهْتَدُونَ ٥

٣١- يٰبَنِي آدَمَ خُذُوا زِينَتَكُمْ عِندَ  
كُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ وَكُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا وَلَا تُسْرِفُوا  
إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُسْرِفِينَ ٥ ع

1010 For *wajh* see n 112 and n 114. Our devotion should be sincere not as in other men's sight but by presenting our whole selves heart and soul to God. Even so it may not be enough for the sight of our heart and soul may be faulty. We should call upon God to give us the light, by which our sincerity may commend itself to Him as true sincerity is in His sight.

1011 Cf vi 94. Our sincerity should be real sincerity, as in God's sight, for when we return to Him, we shall be stripped of all pretence, even such self-deception as may satisfy us in this life.

1012 Guidance is for all. But in some it takes effect, in others the doors are closed against it because they have taken Evil for their friend. If they have lost their way they have richly deserved it for they deliberately took their choice, even though in their self-righteousness, they may think that their sin is their virtue and that their Evil is their Good.

1013 *Beautiful apparel* *zīnat* adornments or apparel for beautiful living construed to mean not only clothes that add grace to the wearer but toilet and cleanliness attention to hair, and other small personal details which no self-respecting man or woman ought to neglect when going solemnly even before a great human dignitary, if only out of respect for the dignity of the occasion. How much more important it is to attend to these details when we solemnly apply our minds to the Presence of God though He is always present everywhere! But the caution against excess applies men must not go to prayer in silks or ornaments appropriate to women. Similarly sober food good and wholesome, is not to be divorced from offices of religion, only the caution against excess applies strictly. A duty, unkempt, slovenly Faqir could not claim sanctity in Islam.



C 84 —God has forbidden the things  
 (VII 32 58) That are evil, not those that are good,  
 For these were created for man's  
 Enjoyment The transgressors  
 Are those who reject God's Signs  
 They will have no share in the Bliss  
 Of the Hereafter But the righteous  
 Will dwell in Peace, and the Hope  
 That was promised will be theirs

## SECTION 4

32 Say Who hath forbidden  
 The beautiful (gifts) of God,<sup>1014</sup>  
 Which He hath produced  
 For His servants,  
 And the things, clean and pure,  
 Which He hath provided  
 For sustenance?  
 Say They are, in the life  
 Of this world, for those  
 Who believe, (and) purely<sup>1015</sup>  
 For them on the Day  
 Of Judgment Thus do We  
 Explain the Signs in detail  
 For those who understand

٣٢- قُلْ مَنْ حَرَّمَ رِيْنَةُ اللّٰهِ  
 الَّتِيْ اَخْرَجَ لِعِبَادِهِ  
 وَالطَّيِّبَاتِ مِنَ الرِّزْقِ  
 قُلْ هِيَ لِلَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا فِي الْحَيٰوةِ  
 الدُّنْيَا  
 خَالِصَةً يَّوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ  
 كَذٰلِكَ نَفَصِّلُ الْآيٰتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُوْنَ ٥

33 Say The things that my Lord  
 Hath indeed forbidden are<sup>1016</sup>  
 Shameful deeds, whether open  
 Or secret, sins and trespasses  
 Against truth or reason, assigning  
 Of partners to God, for which  
 Ye are given no authority,  
 And saying things about God  
 Of which ye have no knowledge

٣٣- قُلْ اِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ رَبِّي الْفَوَاحِشَ مَا ظَهَرَ  
 مِنْهَا وَ مَا بَطَّنَ وَالْاِثْمَ وَالْبَغْيَ  
 بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ وَاَنْ تُشْرِكُوْا بِاللّٰهِ  
 مَا لَمْ يُنَزَّلْ بِهِ سُلْطٰنًا  
 وَاَنْ تَقُوْلُوْا عَلٰى اللّٰهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُوْنَ ٥

1014 Asceticism often means the negation of art and beauty It has no necessary sanctity attached to it

1015 The beautiful and good things of life are really meant for and should be the privilege of those with faith in God If they do not always have them in this life, and if there is sometimes the semblance of others having them who do not deserve them let us at least consider the matter in another light Our faith in God's wisdom is unshaken and we know that these are but fleeting and mixed types of the things in the spiritual world Their pure counterparts in the spiritual world will be only for those who proved, in all the trials of this world, that they had faith

1016 The forbidden things are described in four categories (1) what is shameful or unbecoming the sort of things which have also legal and social sanctions, not of a local but of a universal kind they may be called offences against society, (2) sins against self and trespasses or excesses of every sort, these are against truth and reason, here would come in indiscipline, failure in doing intangible duties not clearly defined by law, selfishness or self aggrandisement, which may be condoned by custom and not punished by law, etc, (3) erecting fetishes or false gods, this is treason against the true God, and (4) corrupting religion by debasing superstitions, etc

- 34 **No** every People is a term<sup>1017</sup>  
Appointed when their term  
Is reached, not an hour  
Can they cause delay,  
Nor (an hour) can they  
Advance (in anticipation)

۳۴- وَلِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ أَجَلٌ فَإِذَا جَاءَ أَجْلُهُمْ  
لَا يَسْتَأْخِرُونَ سَاعَةً  
وَلَا يَسْتَقْدِمُونَ ○

- 35 Oh ye Children of Adam !  
Whenever there come to you  
Apostles from amongst you,  
Rehearsing My Signs unto you,—  
Those who do right  
And mend (their lives),—  
On them shall be no fear  
Nor shall they grieve

۳۵- يٰٓبَنِي آدَمَ إِنَّا جَاءُوكُم بِرُسُلٍ مِنْكُمْ  
يَقُصُّونَ عَلَيْكُمْ آيَاتِي الَّتِي كُنْتُمْ تُكْفِرُ  
فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ  
وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ○

- 36 But those who reject  
Our Signs and treat them  
With arrogance,—they  
Are Companions of the Fire,  
To dwell therein (for ever)

۳۶- وَالَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا  
وَاسْتَكْبَرُوا عَنْهَا أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ  
هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ○

- 37 Who can do more wrong  
Than one who invents  
A lie against God  
Or rejects His Signs ?  
For such, their portion<sup>1018</sup>  
Appointed must reach them  
From the Book (of Decrees)  
Until, when Our messengers  
(Of death) arrive and take  
Their souls, they say  
“ Where are the things  
That ye used to invoke  
In preference to God ? ”  
They will reply, “ They

۳۷- مِمَّنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ افْتَرَىٰ عَلَى اللَّهِ  
كَذِبًا أَوْ كَذَّبَ بِآيَاتِهِ  
أُولَٰئِكَ يَنَالُهُمْ نَصِيبُهُمْ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ  
حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَ نَهُمْ رُسُلُنَا يَتَوَكَّلُوهُمْ  
قَالُوا أَيْنَ مَا كُنْتُمْ تَدْعُونَ مِنْ  
دُونِ اللَّهِ  
قَالُوا

1017 People *ummat* I do not know whether "generation" would not be more appropriate here. If so it would refer to the Time Spirit for it affects a whole number of people living contemporaneously and while we deal grammatically with a group we really have in mind the individuals composing the group. Anyway the lesson is what is suggested in the following verses. There is only a limited time for an individual or for a group of people. If they do not make good during that time of probation, the chance is lost and it cannot come again. We cannot retard or advance the march of time by a single hour or minute. ("Hour" in the text expresses an indefinite but short period of time.)

1018 It must not be supposed that the rebels against God would at once be cut off in this life for their sins. They will get the portion allotted to them, including the good things of life and the chance of repentance and reformation during their probationary period on this earth. During that period they will have a full run. After that period expires, they will be called to account. They will themselves see that the false things in which they put their trust, were false, and they will confess their sin, but it will be too late.

Have left us in the lurch,"  
And they will bear witness  
Against themselves, that they  
Had rejected God

- 38 He will say "Enter ye  
In the company of  
The Peoples who passed away  
Before you—men and Jinns,—  
Into the Fire Every time  
A new People enters,  
It curses its sister-People  
(That went before), until  
They follow each other, all  
Into the Fire Saith the last  
About the first "Our Lord!  
It is these that misled us  
So give them a double  
Penalty in the Fire"  
He will say "Doubled<sup>1019</sup>  
For all" but this  
Ye do not understand

- 39 Then the first will say  
To the last "See then!  
No advantage have ye  
Over us, so taste ye  
Of the Penalty for all  
That ye did!"<sup>1020</sup>

#### SECTION 5

- 40 **T**o those who reject  
Our Signs and treat them  
With arrogance, no opening  
Will there be of the gates

صَلُّوا عَنَّا وَشَهِدُوا عَلٰى اَنْفُسِهِمْ  
اَنْهُمْ كَانُوا كٰفِرِيْنَ ٥

٣٨- قَالَ ادْخُلُوا فِيْ اُمَمٍ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ  
قَبْلِكُمْ مِنَ الْجِنِّ وَالْاِنْسِ  
فِي النَّارِ  
كُلَّمَا دَخَلَتْ اُمَّةٌ لَعَنَتْ اُخْتَهَا  
حَتّٰى اِذَا دَاخَلُوْا فِيْهَا جَمِيْعًا  
قَالَتْ اُخْرِبُوْهُمْ لِاُولٰٓئِهِمْ  
رَبَّنَا هٰؤُلَاءِ اَضَلُّوْا  
فَاَتَيْنَهُمْ عَذَابًا زَعْفًا مِّنَ النَّارِ  
قَالَ لِكُلٍّ صِغْفٌ وَلٰكِنْ لَا تَعْلَمُوْنَ ٥

٣٩- وَقَالَتْ اُولٰٓئِهِمْ لِاُخْرِبُوْهُمْ  
مَّا كَانَ لَكُمْ عَلَيْنَا مِنْ فَضْلٍ  
فَذُوقُوا الْعَذَابَ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْسِبُوْنَ ٥

٤٠- اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ كَذَّبُوْا بِآيٰتِنَا وَاسْتَكْبَرُوْا  
عَنْهَا لَا نَفْعَ لَهُمْ اَبْوَابُ

1019 The earlier generations committed a double crime (1) their own sins (2) the bad example they set for those that followed. We are responsible not only for our own misdeeds but for those which our example and our teaching to our juniors may induce them to commit. But it does not lie in the mouth of the juniors to ask for a double punishment for seniors: the motive is not justice but pure spite which is itself a sin. Farther the later generations have to answer for two things (1) their own sins and (2) their failure to learn from the past from the experiences of those who preceded them. They should have an advantage in this respect being 'in the foremost files of Time,' but they did not learn. Thus there was nothing to choose between the earlier and later generations in the matter of guilt. But how few people understand this!

In vi 160 we were told that good was rewarded tenfold but evil was punished according to its guilt, in perfect justice. This verse is in no way inconsistent with it. Two crimes must have a double penalty. But we must understand 'ten times' and 'double' figuratively and not quantitatively.

1020 Wrong doers have really no sense of honour towards each other. Honour among thieves is an exceptional, not an ordinary, experience. In real life guilt and crime are apt to indulge in mean spite and bitter recriminations against accomplices.

Of heaven, nor will they  
Enter the Garden, until  
The camel can pass  
Through the eye of the needle  
Such is Our reward  
For those in sin

الْتَّمَاءُ وَلَا يَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ  
حَتَّى يَلْبِغَ الْجَمَلُ فِي سَمِّ الْخِيَاطِ  
وَكَذَلِكَ نُجْزِي الْمُجْرِمِينَ

- 41 For them there is  
Hell, as a couch  
(Below) and folds and folds  
Of covering above such  
Is Our requital of those  
Who do wrong

٢١- لَهُمْ مِنْ جَهَنَّمَ مِهَادٌ  
وَمِنْ فَوْقِهِمْ غَوَاطٍ  
وَكَذَلِكَ نُجْزِي الظَّالِمِينَ

- 42 But those who believe  
And work righteousness,—  
No burden do We place  
On any soul, but that  
Which it can bear,—  
They will be Companions  
Of the Garden, therein  
To dwell (for ever)

٢٢- وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ  
لَا نُكَلِّفُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا  
أُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْجَنَّةِ  
هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ

- 43 And We shall remove  
From their hearts any  
Lurking sense of injury,—<sup>1021</sup>  
Beneath them will be  
Rivers flowing,—and they  
Shall say "Praise be to God,  
Who hath guided us  
To this (felicity) never  
Could we have found  
Guidance, had it not been  
For the guidance of God  
Indeed it was the truth  
That the Apostles of our Lord  
Brought unto us" And they  
Shall hear the cry  
"Behold! the Garden before you!"

٢٣- وَنَزَعْنَا مَا فِي صُدُورِهِمْ مِنْ غِلٍّ  
فِي الْجَنَّةِ مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ  
وَقَالُوا الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ  
الَّذِي هَدانا لِهَذَا  
وَمَا كُنَّا لِنَهْتَدِيَ  
لَوْلَا أَنْ هَدانا اللَّهُ  
لَقَدْ جَاءَتْ رُسُلُ رَبِّنَا بِالْحَقِّ  
وَنُودُوا أَنْ تَبْلُغُوا الْجَنَّةَ

1021 A man who may have suffered or been disappointed may have a lurking sense of injury at the back of his mind which may spoil his enjoyment on account of past memory intruding in the midst of felicity. In such cases memory itself is pain. Even sorrow is intensified by memory as Tennyson says "A sorrow's crown of sorrows is remembering happier things." But that is in this our imperfect life. In the perfect felicity of the righteous all such feelings will be blotted out. No heartaches then and no memories of them! The clouds of the past will have dissolved in glorious light, and no past happiness will be comparable with the perfect happiness which will have then been attained. Nor will any sense of envy or shortcoming be possible in that perfect bliss.

Ye have been made <sup>1022</sup>  
Its inheritors, for your  
Deeds (of righteousness) "

- 44 The Companions of the Garden  
Will call out to the Companions  
Of the Fire " We have  
Indeed found the promises  
Of our Lord to us true  
Have you also found  
Your Lord's promises true ? "  
They shall say, " Yes ", but <sup>1023</sup>  
A Crier shall proclaim  
Between them " The curse  
Of God is on the wrong-doers , —

45. " Those who would hinder (men)  
From the path of God  
And would seek in it  
Something crooked <sup>1024</sup>  
They were those who  
Denied the Hereafter "

- 46 Between them shall be  
A veil, and on the Heights <sup>1025</sup>

أَوْرَثْتُمُوهَا بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ○

٢٢- وَنَادَىٰ أَصْحَابُ الْجَنَّةِ أَصْحَابَ النَّارِ  
أَنْ قَدْ وَجَدْنَا مَا وَعَدَنَا رَبُّنَا حَقًّا  
فهلْ وَجَدْتُمْ مَا وَعَدَ رَبُّكُمْ حَقًّا  
قَالُوا نَعَمْ  
فَأَذِنَ مَوْذِنٌ  
يَنبَأُهُمْ أَنَّ لَعْنَةَ اللَّهِ عَلَى الْظَالِمِينَ ○

٢٥- الَّذِينَ يَصُدُّونَ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ  
وَيَبْغُونَهَا عِوَجًا  
وَهُمْ بِالْآخِرَةِ كَافِرُونَ ○

٢٦- وَبَيْنَهُمَا حِجَابٌ وَعَلَى الْأَعْرَافِ

1022 Jesus said Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth Matt v 5 Here we are told blessed are the righteous for they shall inherit the kingdom of heaven The stress here is on actual practical deeds of righteousness whether they find their rewards on earth or not is immaterial their attention is directed to an infinitely greater reward the kingdom of heaven In the Sermon on the Mount this is promised to the poor in spirit Matt v 3

1023 The Companions of the Fire can only answer a single word ' Yes ' such is their state of misery Even so their voice is drowned in the voice of the Crier who explains their state they are in a state of curse that is deprivation of the grace and mercy of God Such deprivation is the highest misery that souls can suffer

1024 The unrighteous reflect their own crooked minds when the path of God is before them Instead of going straight they try to find something in it that suits their own crooked ideas Frankly they have no faith in the final Goal the Hereafter

1025 This is a difficult passage and Commentators have interpreted it in different ways Three distinct schools of thought may be discerned in the interpretation (1) One school thinks that the men on the Heights are angels or such men of exalted spiritual dignity (eg the great apostles) as will be able to know the souls at sight as regards their spiritual worth the Heights will be their exalted stations from which they will welcome the righteous with a salutation of peace even before the righteous have entered heaven the salutation of peace being itself an assurance of salvation to those whom they salute (2) Another school of thought thinks that the men on the Heights are such souls as are not decidedly on the side of merit or decidedly on the side of sin but evenly balanced on a partition between heaven and hell Their case is yet to be decided but their salutation to the righteous is a wistful salutation because they hope for God's Mercy (3) The third line of interpretation, with which I agree is close to the first with this exception that the partition and the Heights are figurative The higher souls will rejoice at the approaching salvation of the righteous

Will be men  
Who would know every one  
By his marks they will call  
Out to the Companions  
Of the Garden, "Peace on you"  
They will not have entered,  
But they will have  
An assurance (thereof)

رَجَالٌ يَعْرِفُونَ كُلًّا بِسِيمَاهُمْ  
وَنَادُوا أَصْحَابَ الْجَنَّةِ  
أَنْ سَلِّمُوا عَلَيْنَا لَمْ يَدْخُلُوهَا  
وَهُمْ يَطْغَوْنَ ○

- 47 When their eyes <sup>1026</sup> shall be turned  
Towards the Companions  
Of the Fire, they will say  
"Our Lord! send us not  
To the company  
Of the wrong-doers"

٣٦- وَإِذَا صُوفِتْ أَبْصَارُهُمْ  
تِلْقَاءَ أَصْحَابِ النَّارِ قَالُوا رَبَّنَا لَا تَجْعَلْنَا  
مَعَ الْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ ○

#### SECTION 6

- 48 The men on the Heights  
Will call to certain men  
Whom they will know  
From their marks, saying <sup>1027</sup>  
"Of what profit to you  
Were your hoards and your  
Arrogant ways?"

٣٨- وَنَادَى أَصْحَابُ الْأَعْرَافِ رَجَالًا  
يَعْرِفُونَهُمْ بِسِيمَاهُمْ  
قَالُوا مَا أَغْنَىٰ عَنْكُمْ جَمْعُكُمْ  
وَمَا كُنْتُمْ تَسْتَكْبِرُونَ ○

- 49 "Behold! are these not  
The men whom you swore  
That God with His Mercy  
Would never bless?  
Enter ye the Garden  
No fear shall be on you,  
Nor shall ye grieve"

٣٩- أَهَؤُلَاءِ الَّذِينَ أَقْسَمْتُمْ  
لَا يَنَالُهُمُ اللَّهُ بِرَحْمَةٍ  
أَدْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ  
لَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْكُمْ وَلَا أَنْتُمْ تَحْزَنُونَ ○

- 50 The Companions of the Fire  
Will call to the Companions  
Of the Garden "Pour down  
To us water or anything

٥٠- وَنَادَى أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ أَصْحَابَ الْجَنَّةِ  
أَنْ أَفِضُوا عَلَيْنَا مِنَ الْمَاءِ أَوْ مِمَّا

1026 *Their eyes* according to interpretation (2) of the last note *their* would refer to the people whose fate has not yet been decided and the speech would be theirs according to interpretations (1) and (3) in that note, 'their' would refer to the Companions of the Garden who would realise the terrible nature of hell and express their horror of it. I prefer the latter. Then the mention of the men on the Heights and their speech in verse 48 comes in naturally as a different kind of speech from a different kind of men.

1027 This speech is in three parts: (1) the last lines of this verse are addressed to the Companions of the Fire, reminding them (as a bench of judges might speak to a prisoner) of the futility of their wealth and riches and arrogance in their earthly life, (2) the second part, in the first half of verse 49, recalls to their minds how false was their contempt of the good but lowly men who are now to be the inheritors of heaven, and (3) the latter part of verse 49, "enter ye the Garden" is addressed to the Blessed, to give them a welcome to their state of felicity.

That God doth provide  
For your sustenance "  
They will say " Both  
These things hath God forbidden  
To those who rejected Him ,—<sup>1028</sup>

رَزَقَكُمْ اللَّهُ ۖ قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ حَرَمَهُمَا  
عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ ۝

51 "Such as took their religion  
To be mere amusement  
And play, and were deceived  
By the life of the world "  
That day shall We forget them <sup>1029</sup>  
As they forgot the meeting  
Of this day of theirs,  
And as they were wont  
To reject Our Signs

٥١- الَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا دِينَهُمْ لَهْوًا  
وَلَعِبًا وَغَرَّتُهُمُ الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا  
فَالْيَوْمَ نَنْسَاهُمْ  
كَمَا سَوَّاهُمْ يَوْمَهُمْ هَذَا ۖ  
وَمَا كَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا يَجْحَدُونَ ۝

52 For We had certainly  
Sent unto them a Book,  
Based on knowledge,  
Which We explained  
In detail,—a guide  
And a mercy  
To all who believe

٥٢- وَلَقَدْ جِئْنَاهُمْ بِكِتَابٍ  
فَضَّلْنَاهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ هَدًى  
وَرَحْمَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ۝

53 Do they just wait  
For the final fulfilment  
Of the event ? On the day  
The event is finally fulfilled, <sup>1030</sup>  
Those who disregarded it  
Before will say " The apostles  
Of our Lord did indeed  
Bring true (tidings) Have we  
No intercessors now to intercede  
On our behalf ? Or could we

٥٣- هَلْ يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَّا تَأْوِيلَهُ  
يَوْمَ يَأْتِي تَأْوِيلَهُ  
يَقُولُ الَّذِينَ نَسُوهُ مِنْ قَبْلُ  
قَدْ جَاءَتْ رُسُلُ رَبِّنَا بِالْحَقِّ فَهَلْ لَنَا  
مِنْ شَفْعَاءَ فَيَشْفَعُوا لَنَا أَوْ

1028 The Companions of the Fire will thirst for water and not get it and for sustenance which will not be theirs while the Companions of the Garden will have the refreshing rain of God's Mercy and the crystal waters of the springs and rivers of God's pleasure and they will enjoy the bliss of God's Countenance which will be their supreme nourishment and the fruit of their life of probation and seeking. These things will not be transferable Cf also xxxvii 41 47 62 67

1029 Forgetfulness may be involuntary from a defect of memory or figuratively, a deliberate turning away from or ignoring of something we do not want, as when we say in an argument "you conveniently forget that so and so is so and so" Here the latter kind is meant. If men deliberately ignored the Hereafter in spite of warnings can they expect to be received by God Whom they themselves rejected ?

1030 If those without Faith want to wait and see what happens in the Hereafter they will indeed learn the truth but it will be too late for them to profit by it then. All the false ideals and false gods which they put their trust upon will leave them in the lurch. If they thought that the goodness or greatness of others would help them they will be undeceived on the day when their personal responsibility will be enforced. There will be no salvation except on their own record. How they will then wish that they had another chance! But their chance will be gone.

Be sent back ? Then should we  
Behave differently from our  
Behaviour in the past "  
In fact they will have lost  
Their souls, and the things  
They invented will leave  
Them in the lurch

## SECTION 7

- 54 Your Guardian-Lord  
Is God, Who created  
The heavens and the earth <sup>1031</sup>  
In six Days, and is firmly  
Established on the Throne <sup>1032</sup>  
(Of authority) He draweth  
The night as a veil  
O'er the day, each seeking  
The other in rapid succession  
He created the sun,  
The moon, and the stars,  
(All) governed by laws  
Under His Command  
Is it not His to create  
And to govern ? Blessed  
Be God, the Cherisher  
And Sustainer of the Worlds !

- 55 Call on your Lord  
With humility and in private <sup>1033</sup>

تُرْكَدُ مَتَعْمَلُ غَيْرِ الَّذِي كُنَّا نَعْمَلُ  
قَدْ خَسِرُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ  
وَصَلَّ عَنْهُمْ  
مَا كَانُوا يَفْتَرُونَ ۝

۵۴- اِنَّ رَبَّكُمُ اللّٰهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ  
السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضَ  
فِي سِتَّةِ اَيَّامٍ  
ثُمَّ اسْتَوٰى عَلَى الْعَرْشِ  
يُعْثِي الْبَيْلَ النَّهَارَ يَطْلُبُهُ حَثِيثًا  
وَالشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ وَالنُّجُومَ  
مُسَخَّرَاتٍ بِاَمْرِهٖ  
اَلَا لَهُ الْخَلْقُ وَالْاَمْرُ  
تَبٰرَكَ اللّٰهُ رَبُّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ۝  
۵۵- اَدْعُوا رَبَّكُمْ تَضَرُّعًا وَخُفْيَةً

1031 A sublime verse comparable to the Throne Verse II 255 The Creation in six Days is of course metaphorical In xlv 14 the Days of God ' refer not so much to time as to the growth in us of a spiritual sense a sense of sin and a sense of God's Mercy In xxii 47 we are told that a Day in the sight of God is like a thousand years of our reckoning and in lxx 4 the comparison is with 50 000 of our years In the history of our material earth we may reckon six great epochs of evolution The significance of the figure six will be discussed in connection with xli 9 12 where the matter is referred to in more detail

1032 Throne ( *arsh* ) is of course metaphorical a symbol of authority power and vigilance as *Kursi* (seat throne) was in II 255 *Kursi* perhaps refers to majesty while *arsh* refers to power and the slightly different shades of meaning throw light on the two passages Here we are told of the creation of the heavens and the earth in six days But lest we should be obsessed with the Jewish idea that God rested on the seventh day we are told that the Creation was but a prelude to God's work for His authority is exercised constantly by the laws which He establishes and enforces in all parts of His Creation The beautiful imagery of night and day seeking out each other in rapid succession is still further enforced in the Arabic by the double accusative of the verb *yugshī* showing the mutual interactions of the day and the night each covering the other in turn The heavenly bodies show an order which is evidence of His constant care and government Not only that, but it is only He Who creates, maintains and governs and no one else

1033 In prayer we must avoid any arrogance or show or loudness or vanity of requests or words If excess is condemned in all things it is specially worthy of condemnation when we go humbly before our Lord,—we poor creatures before the Omnipotent Who knoweth all



For God loveth not  
Those who trespass beyond  
bounds

- 56 Do no mischief on the earth,  
After it hath been <sup>1034</sup>  
Set in order, but call  
On Him with fear <sup>1035</sup>  
And longing (in your hearts)  
For the Mercy of God  
Is (always) near  
To those who do right

- 57 It is He who sendeth  
The Winds like heralds  
Of glad tidings, going before <sup>1036</sup>  
His Mercy when they have  
Carried the heavy-laden  
Clouds, We drive them  
To a land that is dead,  
Make rain to descend thereon,  
And produce every kind  
Of harvest therewith thus  
Shall We raise up the dead  
Perchance ye may understand

- 58 From the land that is clean  
And good, by the Will  
Of its Cherisher, springs up  
Produce, (rich) after its kind <sup>1037</sup>

إِنَّكَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ ٥٦

٥٦- وَلَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ  
بَعْدَ إِصْلَاحِهَا  
وَادْعُوهُ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا إِنَّ رَحْمَتَ اللَّهِ  
قَرِيبٌ مِّنَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ٥٧

٥٧- وَهُوَ الَّذِي يُرْسِلُ الرِّيحَ  
بُشْرًا بَيْنَ يَدَيْ رَحْمَتِهِ  
حَتَّىٰ إِذَا أَقْلَّتْ سَحَابًا بِقَالًا سُقْنَاهُ  
لِبَلَدٍ مَّيِّتٍ فَأَنْزَلْنَا بِهِ الْمَاءَ فَأَخْرَجْنَا  
بِهِ مِنْ كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ  
كَذَٰلِكَ نُخْرِجُ الْمَوْتَىٰ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ ٥٨

٥٨- وَالْبَلَدُ الظَّيْبُ  
يُخْرِجُ نَبَاتَهُ بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِ ٥٨

1034 The man who prays with humility and earnestness finds the ground prepared by God for his spiritual advancement It is all set in order and cleared of weeds He does not like the wicked upset that order to introduce evil or mischief into it

1035 *Fear and longing* the fear of God is really a fear lest we should diverge from His Will or do anything which would not be pleasing to Him unlike ordinary fear it therefore brings us nearer to God and in fact nourishes our longing and desire for Him

1036 The Parable is complete in its triple significance (1) In the physical world the winds go like heralds of glad tidings they are the advance guard behind which is coming a great army of winds driving heavily laden clouds before it the wise Providence of God is their General, who directs them towards a parched land on which the clouds deliver their gladdening showers of mercy, which convert the dead land into a living fertile and beautiful land bearing a rich harvest (2) In the spiritual world the winds are the great motive forces in the mind of man or in the world around him that bring the clouds or instruments of God's Mercy which descend and fertilise souls hitherto spiritually dead (3) If we can see or experience such things in our life here below can we doubt the resurrection of our souls after we die here?

1037 The triple parable explained in the last note is here continued (1) In the physical world, the fertilising showers of rain yield a rich harvest on good soil, but bad soil yields little or nothing (2) In the spiritual world, also, God's Mercies evoke no response in some souls which have chosen evil (3) In the final reckoning, though all will be raised not all will achieve the fulfilment of their lives

But from the land that is  
Bad, springs up nothing  
But that which is niggardly  
Thus do we explain the Signs  
By various (symbols) to those  
Who are grateful <sup>1038</sup>

وَالَّذِي خُبْتُ لَا يُخْرِجُ إِلَّا نَكِدًا  
كَذَلِكَ نَضْرِبُ الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ  
يَشْكُرُونَ ۝

C 85 — Noah's warning was rejected by his  
(VII 59 99) Generation, and they were destroyed  
In the Flood Hūd was defied  
By his own people 'Ād, but they were  
Swept away by a terrible blast  
Their successors, the Thamūd, were puffed up  
With pride and injustice, but behold !  
An earthquake buried them for their sins  
After Sālih had warned them from God  
With a rain of brimstone and fire  
Were overwhelmed the Cities of the Plain  
For their unexampled lusts, against which  
Lot did warn them The people of Midian  
Were given to mischief and fraud Shu'aib  
Did warn them, but they heeded not,  
And perished in an earthquake  
God's punishment is sure for wickedness and sin

### SECTION 8

59 ~~We~~ We sent Noah to his  
people <sup>1039</sup>  
He said "Oh my people!  
Worship God! ye have  
No other god but Him  
I fear for you the Punishment  
Of a dreadful Day!"

60 The leaders of his people  
Said "Ah! We see thee  
Evidently wandering (in mind) "

٥٩- لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا نُوحًا إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِ  
فَقَالَ يَتَقَوْمِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ  
مَا لَكُمْ مِنْ إِلَهٍ غَيْرُهُ إِنِّي أَخَافُ  
عَلَيْكُمْ عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ ۝  
٦٠- قَالَ الْمَلَأُ مِنَ قَوْمِهِ  
إِنَّا لَنَرَاكَ فِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ ۝

1038 *Those who are grateful* are those who joyfully receive God's Message, and respond to it by deeds of holiness and righteousness

1039 The story of Noah in greater detail will be found in XI 25 49 Here the scheme is to tell briefly the stories of some of the Prophets between Noah and Moses, and lead up thus to a lesson for the contemporaries of the Apostle Muhammad himself When Noah attacked the wickedness of his generation he was laughed at for a madman, for he mentioned the Great Day to come in the Hereafter God's retribution came soon afterwards—the great Flood, in which his unbelieving people were drowned, but he and those who believed in him and came into the Ark were saved

61 He said " Oh my people !  
No wandering is there  
In my (mind) on the contrary  
I am an apostle from  
The Lord and Cherisher  
Of the Worlds !

62 "I but fulfil towards you  
The duties of my Lord's mission  
Sincere is my advice to you,  
And I know from God  
Something that ye know not

63 " Do ye wonder that  
There hath come to you  
A message from your Lord,  
Through a man of your own  
People, to warn you,—  
So that ye may fear God  
And receive His Mercy ' "

64 But they rejected him,  
And We delivered him,  
And those with him,  
In the Ark  
But We overwhelmed  
In the Flood those  
Who rejected Our Signs  
They were indeed  
A blind people !

#### SECTION 9

65 **T**o the 'Ad people,<sup>1040</sup>  
(We sent) Hūd, one

٦١- قَالَ يَقَوْمِ لَيْسَ بِي ضَلَالَةٌ  
وَلَكِنِّي رَسُولٌ  
مِّن رَّبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ○

٦٢- أَنَا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ رَسُولٌ مِّن رَّبِّي  
وَأَنصَحُ لَكُمْ  
وَأَعْلَمُ مِنَ اللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ○

٦٣- أَوْ عَجِبْتُمْ أَن جَاءَكُمْ  
ذِكْرٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ  
عَلَى رَجُلٍ مِّنكُمْ لِيُنذِرَكُمْ  
وَلِتَسْتَغْفِرُوا وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ○

٦٤- فَكَذَّبُوهُ وَأَخْبَنُوهُ  
وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ فِي الْفُلِ  
وَأَعْرَفْنَا الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا  
إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا قَوْمًا عِيبًا ۝

٦٥- وَإِلَى عَادِ أَخَاهُمْ هُودًا

1040 The 'Ad people, with their prophet Hud are mentioned in many places See especially xxvi 123 140, and xli 21 26 Their story belongs to Arabian tradition Their eponymous ancestor 'Ad was fourth in generation from Noah having been a son of Aus the son of Aram, the son of Sām, the son of Noah They occupied a large tract of country in Southern Arabia extending from 'Ummān at the mouth of the Persian Gulf to Ḥaḍḥramaut and Yemen at the southern end of the Red Sea The people were tall in stature and were great builders Probably the long winding tracts of sands (ahqaf) in their dominions (xli 21) were irrigated with canals They forsook the true God and oppressed their people A three years famine visited them but yet they took no warning At length a terrible blast of wind destroyed them and their land, but a remnant known as the second 'Ad or the Thamūd (see below) were saved, and afterwards suffered a similar fate for their sins

The tomb of the Prophet Hūd (qabr Nabī Hūd) is still traditionally shown in Ḥaḍḥramaut, latitude 16° N and longitude 49½° E about 90 miles north of Mukalla There are ruins and inscriptions in the neighbourhood There is an annual pilgrimage to it in the month of Rajab See "Ḥaḍḥramaut, Some of its Mysteries Unveiled," by D van der Meulen and H von Wissmann, Leyden, 1932

Of their (own) brethren  
He said "Oh my people!  
Worship God! ye have  
No other god but Him  
Will ye not fear (God)?"

قَالَ يَقَوْمِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ  
مَا لَكُمْ مِنْ إِلَهٍ غَيْرُهُ  
أَفَلَا تَتَّقُونَ ○

66 The leaders of the unbelievers  
Among his people said  
"Ah! we see thou art  
An imbecile!" and "We think  
Thou art a liar!"

٦٦- قَالَ الْمَلَأُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ قَوْمِهِ  
إِنَّا لَنَرُكَ فِي سَفَاهَةٍ  
وَإِنَّا لَنَظُنُّكَ مِنَ الْكَاذِبِينَ ○

67 He said "Oh my people!  
I am no imbecile, but  
I am an apostle from  
The Lord and Cherisher  
Of the Worlds!"

٦٧- قَالَ يَقَوْمِ لَيْسَ بِي سَفَاهَةٌ  
وَلَكِنِّي رَسُولٌ  
مِنْ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ○

68 "I but fulfil towards you  
The duties of my Lord's mission  
I am to you a sincere  
And trustworthy adviser

٦٨- أَوَلَيْسَ كُمْ رِسَالَتِ رَبِّي  
وَإِنَّا لَكُم نَاصِحٌ أَمِينٌ ○

69 "Do ye wonder that  
There hath come to you  
A message from your Lord  
Through a man of your own  
People, to warn you?  
Celebrate (God's goodness)  
In that He made you  
Inheritors after the people  
Of Noah, and gave you  
A stature tall among the nations  
Call in remembrance  
The benefits (ye have received)  
From God that so  
Ye may prosper"

٦٩- أَوْ عَجِبْتُمْ أَنْ جَاءَكُمْ  
ذِكْرٌ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ عَلَى رَجُلٍ مِنْكُمْ  
لِيُنْذِرَكُمْ  
وَاذْكُرُوا إِذْ جَعَلَكُمْ  
خُلَفَاءَ مِنْ بَعْدِ قَوْمِ نُوحٍ  
وَزَادَكُمْ فِي الْخَلْقِ بَضْطَةً  
فَاذْكُرُوا آلَاءَ اللَّهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ○

70 They said "Comest thou  
To us, that we may worship  
God alone, and give up  
The cult of our fathers?  
Bring us what thou  
Threatenest us with,  
If so be that thou  
Tellest the truth!"

٧٠- قَالُوا أَجِئْتَنَا لِنَعْبُدَ اللَّهَ وَحْدَهُ  
وَنَذَرَ مَا كَانُوا يَعْبُدُ آبَاءَهُمْ  
فَاتِنَا بِمَا تُوعَدُنَا  
إِنْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الصَّادِقِينَ ○

- 71 He said " Punishment  
And wrath have already <sup>1041</sup>  
Come upon you from your Lord  
Dispute ye with me  
Over names which ye <sup>1042</sup>  
Have devised—ye  
And your fathers,—  
Without authority from God ?  
Then wait I am  
Amongst you, also waiting "

٤١- قَالَ قَدْ وَقَعَتْ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ رَجْسٌ  
وَعَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ۖ فَادْعُوا نَبِيَّ فِيْ اَسْمَاءِ سَمِيْتُمْوَمَا  
اَنْتُمْ وَاٰبَاؤُكُمْ  
مَا نَزَّلَ اللّٰهُ بِهَا مِنْ سُلْطٰنٍ ۚ فَاَنْتُمْ تَخْطَرُوْنَ  
اِنِّىْ مَعَكُمْ مِنَ الْمُنْتَظَرِيْنَ ۝

- 72 We saved him and those  
Who adhered to him,  
By Our Mercy, and We  
Cut off the roots of those  
Who rejected Our Signs  
And did not believe

٤٢- مَا اَنْجَيْنٰهُ وَالَّذِيْنَ مَعَهُ بِرَحْمَةٍ مِّنَّا  
وَقَطَعْنَا دَاۤىِٔرَ الَّذِيْنَ كَذَّبُوْا بِاٰيٰتِنَا  
وَمَا كَانُوْا مُؤْمِنِيْنَ ۝

## SECTION 10

- 73 To the Thamūd people <sup>1043</sup>  
(We sent) Sālih, one

٤٣- وَاِلٰى ثَمُوْدَ اَخَاهُمْ صٰلِحًا

1041 The past tense may be understood in three ways (1) A terrible famine had already afflicted the Ād as a warning before they were overwhelmed in the final blast of hot wind (see the last note) (2) The terrible insolence and sin into which they had fallen was itself a punishment (3) The prophetic past is used as much as to say 'Behold! I see a dreadful calamity it is already on you!'

1042 Why dispute over names and imaginary gods the inventions of your minds? Come to realities. If you ask for the punishment and are waiting in insolent defiance what can I do but also wait?—in fear and trembling for you for I know that God's punishment is sure!

1043 The Thamūd people were the successors to the culture and civilisation of the Ād people for whom see n 1040 and vii 65 above. They were cousins to the Ād apparently a younger branch of the same race. Their story also belongs to Arabian tradition according to which their eponymous ancestor Thamud was a son of Abir (a brother of Ālīm) the son of Sam, the son of Noah. Their seat was in the north west corner of Arabia (Arabia Petraea) between Medina and Syria. It included both rocky country (hijr xi 80) and the spacious fertile valley (Wadi) and plains (country of Qurā which begins just north of the City of Medina) and is traversed by the Hijāz Railway. When the holy Apostle in the 9th year of the Hijra led his expedition to Tabuk (about 400 miles north of Medina) against the Roman forces on a reported Roman invasion from Syria he and his men came across the archaeological remains of the Thamud. The recently excavated rock city of Petra near Ma'ān may go back to the Thamūd though its architecture has many features connecting it with Egyptian and Græco Roman culture overlaying what is called by European writers Nabataean culture. Who were the Nabataeans? They were an old Arab tribe which played a considerable part in history after they came into conflict with Antigonos I in 312 B.C. Their capital was Petra but they extended their territory right up to the Euphrates. In 80 B.C. they were lords of Damascus under their king Ḥāritha (Aretas of Roman history). For some time they were allies of the Roman Empire and held the Red Sea littoral. The Emperor Trajan reduced them and annexed their territory in A.D. 105. The Nabataeans succeeded the Thamūd of Arabian tradition. The Thamūd are mentioned by name in an inscription of the Assyrian King Sargon, dated 715 B.C., as a people of Eastern and Central Arabia (*Encyclopædia of Islam*). See also Appendix IX to S xxvi.

With the advance of material civilisation, the Thamūd people became godless and arrogant, and were destroyed by an earthquake. Their prophet and warner was Ṣāliḥ, and the crisis in their history is connected with the story of a wonderful she camel see next note.

Of their own brethren  
 He said " Oh my people !  
 Worship God , ye have  
 No other god but Him  
 Now hath come unto you  
 A clear (Sign) from your Lord !  
 This she-camel of God  
 Is a Sign unto you  
 So leave her to graze  
 In God's earth, and let her  
 Come to no harm,  
 Or ye shall be seized  
 With a grievous punishment <sup>1044</sup>

74 " And remember how He  
 Made you inheritors  
 After the 'Ad people  
 And gave you habitations  
 In the land ye build  
 For yourselves palaces and castles  
 In (open) plains, and carve out  
 Homes in the mountains,  
 So bring to remembrance  
 The benefits (ye have received)  
 From God, and refrain  
 From evil and mischief  
 On the earth "

75 The leaders of the arrogant  
 Party among his people said

قَالَ يَقَوْمِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ  
 مَا لَكُمْ مِنْ إِلَهٍ غَيْرُهُ  
 قَدْ جَاءَتْكُمْ بَيِّنَةٌ  
 مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ  
 هَذِهِ نَاقَةُ اللَّهِ لَكُمْ آيَةٌ  
 فَمَذَرُوهَا نَافِلًا فِي أَرْضِ اللَّهِ  
 وَلَا تَسْخُوهَا بِسُوءٍ  
 فَيَأْخُذَكُمْ عَذَابُ النَّارِ ○

٧٤- وَأَذْكُرُوا الْمَادَّ حَعَلَكُمْ خُلَفَاءَ  
 مِنْ بَعْدِ عَادٍ  
 وَتَوَّاءَكُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ  
 تَتَّخِذُونَ مِنْ سَهُولِهَا فُصُورًا  
 وَتَنْحِتُونَ الْجِبَالَ بُيُوتًا  
 فَادْكُرُوا الْآيَةَ اللَّهِ  
 وَلَا تَعْتَوْا فِي الْأَرْضِ مُفْسِدِينَ ○

٧٥- قَالَ الْمَلَأُ الَّذِينَ اسْتَكْبَرُوا

1044 The story of this wonderful she camel, that was a Sign to the Thamūd is variously told in tradition. We need not follow the various versions in the traditional story. What we are told in the Qurān is that (1) she was a Sign or Symbol which the prophet Ṣāliḥ used for a warning to the haughty oppressors of the poor (2) there was scarcity of water and the arrogant or privileged classes tried to prevent the access of the poor or their cattle to the springs while Ṣāliḥ intervened on their behalf (xxvi 155 liv 28), (3) like water pasture was considered a free gift of nature in this spacious earth of God (vii 73) but the arrogant ones tried to monopolise the pasture also, (4) this particular she camel was made a test case (liv 27) to see if the arrogant ones would come to reason, (5) the arrogant ones instead of yielding to the reasonable rights of the people, hamstrung the poor she-camel and slew her, probably secretly (xcī 14, liv 29) the cup of their iniquities was full, and the Thamūd people were destroyed by a dreadful earthquake which threw them prone on the ground and buried them with their houses and their fine buildings.

To those who were reckoned  
Powerless—those among them <sup>1054</sup>  
Who believed “ Know ye  
Indeed that Sālih is  
An apostle from his Lord ? ”  
They said “ We do indeed  
Believe in the revelation <sup>016</sup>  
Which hath been sent  
Through him ”

76 The arrogant party said  
“ For our part, we reject  
What ye believe in ”

77 Then they ham-strung  
The she-camel, and insolently  
Defied the order of their Lord,  
Saying “ Oh Sālih ! bring about  
Thy threats, if thou art  
An apostle (of God) ! ”

78 So the earthquake took them <sup>1047</sup>  
Unawares, and they lay  
Prostrate in their homes  
In the morning !

مِنْ قَوْمِهِ  
لِلَّذِينَ اسْتُضْعِفُوا  
لَيَنْ أَمِنْ مِنْهُمْ  
اتَّعَلُّونَ أَنَّ ضَلِحًا مُرْسَلٌ مِنْ رَبِّهِ  
قَالُوا إِنَّا بِنَا أُرْسِلَ بِهِ مُؤْمِنُونَ ○

٤٦ - قَالَ الَّذِينَ اسْتَكْبَرُوا  
إِنَّا بِالذِّمَى أَمِنْتُمْ بِهِ كَفِرُونَ ○

٤٧ - فَعَقَرُوا النَّاقَةَ وَعَتَوْا عَنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّهِمْ  
وَقَالُوا اضْلُحْ أَدْبُنَا بِنَا تَعْدُنَا  
إِنْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ ○

٤٨ - فَأَخَذَ لَهُمُ الرِّجْعَةُ  
فَأَصْحَوْا فِي دَارِهِمْ خَبِيرِينَ ○

1045 As usually happens in such cases the Believers were the lowly and the humble and the oppressors were the arrogant who in self hly keeping back nature's gifts (which are God's gifts) from the people were deaf to the dictates of justice and kindness. Sālih took the side of the unprivileged and was therefore himself attacked.

1046 Notice the relation between the question and the answer. The godless chiefs wanted to discredit Sālih and put a personal question as much as to say 'Is he not a liar?' The Believers took back the issue to the higher plane as much as to say 'We know he is a man of God but look at the justice for which he is making a stand to resist it is to resist God.' The answer of the godless was to reject God in words and in action to commit a further act of cruelty and injustice in ham stringing and killing the she camel at the same time hurling defiance at Sālih and his God.

1047 The retribution was not long delayed. A terrible earthquake came and buried the people and destroyed their boasted civilization. The calamity must have been fairly extensive in area and intense in the terror it inspired for it is described (liv 31) as a 'single mighty blast' (*ṣaḥḥatan wāḥidatan*), the sort of terror inspiring noise which accompanies all big earthquakes.

79 So Ṣāliḥ left them,<sup>1048</sup>  
 Saying "Oh my people!  
 I did indeed convey to you  
 The message for which  
 I was sent by my Lord  
 I gave you good counsel,  
 But ye love not good counsellors!"

٤٩- فَتَوَلَّى عَنْهُمْ وَقَالَ لِقَوْمِ  
 لَقَدْ أَبْلَغْتُكُمْ رَسُولًا مِنْ رَبِّي  
 وَتَصَحَّتْ لَكُمْ  
 وَلَكِنْ لَا تُحِبُّونَ التَّصْحِيحِينَ ٥

80 We also (sent) Lūt<sup>1049</sup>  
 He said to his people  
 "Do ye commit lewdness  
 Such as no people  
 In creation (ever) committed  
 Before you?"

٥٠- وَلُوطًا إِذْ قَالَ لِقَوْمِهِ  
 أَنَا تُنُونَ الْفَاحِشَةَ مَا سَبَقَكُمْ بِهَا مِنْ  
 أَحَدٍ مِنَ الْعَالَمِينَ ٥

81 "For ye practise your lusts  
 On men in preference  
 To women ye are indeed  
 A people transgressing  
 Beyond bounds"

٥١- إِنَّا نَكْمُ لَتَأْتُونَ الرِّجَالَ شَهْوَةً مِنْ  
 دُونِ النِّسَاءِ  
 بَلْ أَنْتُمْ قَوْمٌ مُّسْرِفُونَ ٥

82 And his people gave  
 No answer but this  
 They said, "Drive them out  
 Of your city these are

٥٢- وَمَا كَانَ حِوَاتٍ قَوْمِهِ إِلَّا  
 أَنْ قَالُوا أَخْرِجُوهُمْ مِنْ مَرْيَكُمْ

1048 Ṣāliḥ was saved by God's mercy as a just and righteous man. His speech here may be either a parting warning or it may be a soliloquy lamenting the destruction of his people for their sin and folly.

1049 Lūt is the Lot of the English Bible. His story is biblical but freed from some shameful features which are a blot on the biblical narrative. He was a nephew of Abraham and was sent as an apostle and warner to the people of Sodom and Gomorrah, cities utterly destroyed for their unspeakable sins. They cannot be exactly located but it may be supposed that they were somewhere in the plain east of the Dead Sea. The story of their destruction is told in the 19th chapter of Genesis. Two angels in the shape of handsome young men came to Lot in the evening and became his guests by night. The inhabitants of Sodom in their lust for unnatural crime invaded Lot's house but were repulsed. In the morning, the angels warned Lot to escape with his family. 'Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven, and He overthrew those cities, and all the plain and all the inhabitants of the cities and that which grew upon the ground. But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt.' (Gen. xix. 24-26)

Note that Lot's people are the people to whom he is sent on a mission. He was not one of their own brethren as was Ṣāliḥ or Shu'aib.



Indeed men who want  
To be clean and pure ! " 1050

- 83 But we saved him  
And his family, except  
His wife she was  
Of those who lagged behind 051

- 84 And we rained down on them  
A shower (of brimstone) 052  
Then see what was the end  
Of those who indulged  
In sin and crime !

### SECTION 11

- 85 To the Madyan people 053

إِنَّهُمْ أَكَّاسٌ يُتَطَهَّرُونَ ○

٨٣- فَأَنْجَيْنَاهُ وَأَهْلَهُ إِلَّا امْرَأَتَهُ  
كَانَتْ مِنَ الْغَابِرِينَ ○

٨٣- وَأَمْطَرْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ مَطَرًا  
فَانْظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُجْرِمِينَ ٤

٨٥- وَإِلَىٰ مَدْيَنَ

1050 An instance of the withering sarcasm that hardened sinners use against the righteous. They wound with words and follow up the insult with deeds of injustice thinking that they would bring the righteous into disgrace. But God looks after His own and in the end the wicked themselves are overthrown when the cup of their iniquity is full.

1051 In the biblical narrative she looks back a physical act (see n 1049) here she is a type of those who lag behind i.e. whose mental and moral attitude in spite of their association with the righteous is to hark back to the glitter of wickedness and sin. The righteous should have one sole objective the Way of God. They should not look behind nor yet to the right or the left.

1052 The shower is expressly stated in Q xi 82 to have been of stones. In xv 73 74 we are told that there was a terrible blast or noise (*saithat*) in addition to the shower of stones. Taking these passages into consideration along with Gen xix 24 (see n 1049 above) I think it is legitimate to translate a shower of brimstone.

1053 Madyan" may be identified with Midian". Midian and the Midianites are frequently mentioned in the Old Testament though the particular incident here mentioned belongs to Arab rather than to Jewish tradition. The Midianites were of Arab race though as neighbours of the Canaanites they probably intermixed with them. They were a wandering tribe it was Midianite merchants to whom Joseph was sold into slavery and who took him to Egypt. Their principal territory in the time of Moses was in the north east of the Sinai Peninsula and east of the Amalekites. Under Moses the Israelites waged a war of extermination against them they slew the kings of Midian slaughtered all the males burnt their cities and castles and captured their cattle (Num xxxi 7 11). This sounds like total extermination. Yet a few generations afterwards they were so powerful that the Israelites for their sins were delivered into the captivity of the Midianites for seven years both the Midianites and their camels were without number and the Israelites hid from them in "dens caves and strongholds" (Judges vii 16). Gideon destroyed them again (Judges vii 1 25) say about two centuries after Moses. As the decisive battle was near the hill of Moreh not far south of Mount Tabor we may localise the Midianites on this occasion in the northern parts of the Jordan valley at least 200 miles north of the Sinai Peninsula.

This and the previous destruction under Moses were local and mention no town of Midian. In later times there was a town of Madyan on the east side of the Gulf of Aqaba. It is mentioned in Josephus Eusebius and Ptolemy (*Encyclopædia of Islam*). Then it disappears from geography. In Muslim times it was a revived town with quite a different kind of population but it never flourished. The Midianites disappeared from history.

We sent Shu'aib,<sup>1054</sup> one  
 Of their own brethren he said  
 " Oh my people ! worship God ,  
 Ye have no other god  
 But Him Now hath come  
 Unto you a clear (Sign)  
 From your Lord ! Give just  
 Measure and weight, nor withhold  
 From the people the things  
 That are their due , and do  
 No mischief on the earth  
 After it has been set  
 In order that will be best  
 For you, if ye have Faith

- 86 " And squat not on every road,  
 Breathing threats, hindering  
 From the path of God  
 Those who believe in Him,  
 And seeking in it  
 Something crooked ,  
 But remember how ye were  
 Little, and He gave you increase  
 And hold in your mind s eye  
 What was the end

أَخَاهُمْ شُعَيْبًا  
 قَالَ يَقُومُوا لِعِبَادَةِ اللَّهِ  
 مَا لَكُمْ مِنْ إِلَهٍ غَيْرُهُ  
 قَدْ جَاءَتْكُمْ بَيِّنَةٌ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ  
 فَأَوْفُوا الْكَيْلَ وَالْمِيزَانَ  
 وَلَا تَبْخَسُوا النَّاسَ أَشْيَاءَهُمْ وَلَا تُفْسِدُوا  
 فِي الْأَرْضِ بَعْدَ إِصْلَاحِهَا  
 ذَلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ  
 ٨٦ - وَلَا تَقْعُدُوا بِكُلِّ صِرَاطٍ تُوعِدُونَ  
 وَتَصُدُّونَ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ  
 مَنْ آمَنَ بِهِ وَنَنْعُوْنَهَا عِوَجًا  
 وَادْكُرُوا إِذْ كُنْتُمْ قَلِيلًا فَكَثَرْتُمْ  
 وَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ

1054 Shu'aib belongs to Arab rather than to Jewish tradition to which he is unknown His identification with Jethro the father in law of Moses has no warrant and I reject it There is no similarity either in names or incidents and there are chronological difficulties (see n 1064 below) If as the Commentators tell us Shu'aib was in the fourth generation from Abraham being a great-grandson of Madyan (a son of Abraham) he would be only about a century from the time of Abraham, whereas the Hebrew Bible would give us a period of four to six centuries between Abraham and Moses The mere fact that Jethro was a Midianite and that another name Hobab is mentioned for a father in law of Moses in Num x 29 is slender ground for identification As the Midianites were mainly a nomad tribe we need not be surprised that their destruction in one or two settlements did not affect their life in wandering sections of the tribe in other geographical regions Shu'aib's mission was apparently in one of the settled towns of the Midianites which was completely destroyed by an earthquake (vii 91) If this happened in the century after Abraham there is no difficulty in supposing that they were again a numerous tribe three or five centuries later in the time of Moses (see last note) As they were a mixed wandering tribe both their resilience and their eventual absorption can be easily understood But the destruction of the settlement or settlements (if the Wood or Aika was a separate settlement see n 2000 to xv 78) to which Shu'aib was sent to preach was complete and no traces of it now remain

The name of the highest mountain of Yemen Nabr Shu'aib (11 000 ft ) has probably no connection with the geographical territory of the nomad Midianites unless we suppose that their wanderings extended so far south from the territories mentioned in the last note

Of those who did mischief <sup>1055</sup>

87 " And if there is a party  
Among you who believes  
In the Message with which  
I have been sent, and a party  
Which does not believe, <sup>1056</sup>  
Hold yourselves in patience  
Until God doth decide

8 Between us for He  
30 Is the best to decide " <sup>1057</sup>

○ الْمُفْسِدِينَ ○

٨٧- وَإِنْ كَانَ طَائِفَةٌ مِّنْكُمْ آمَنُوا

بِالَّذِي أُرْسِلْتُ بِهِ

وَطَائِفَةٌ لَّمْ يُؤْمِنُوا

فَاصْبِرُوا حَتَّى يَحْكُمَ اللَّهُ بَيْنَنَا

وَهُوَ خَيْرُ الْحَاكِمِينَ ○

1055 The Midianites were in the path of a commercial highway of Asia viz that between two such opulent and highly organised nations as Egypt and the Mesopotamian group comprising Assyria and Babylonia Their besetting sins are thus characterised here (1) giving short measure or weight whereas the strictest commercial probity is necessary for success (2) a more general form of such fraud depriving people of rightful dues (3) producing mischief and disorder where peace and order had been established (again in a literal as well as a metaphorical sense) (4) not content with upsetting settled life taking to highway robbery literally as well as (5) metaphorically in two ways viz cutting off people from access to the worship of God and abusing religion and piety for crooked purposes i.e. exploiting religion itself for their crooked ends as when a man builds houses of prayer out of unlawful gains or ostentatiously gives charity out of money which he has obtained by force or fraud etc After setting out this catalogue of besetting sins Shu'aib makes two appeals to the past (1) You began as an insignificant tribe and by God's favour you increased and multiplied in numbers and resources do you not then owe a duty to God to fulfil His Law? (2) What was the result in the case of those who fell into sin? Will you not take warning by their example?

So Shu'aib began his argument with faith in God as the source of all virtue and ended it with destruction as the result of all sin In the next verse he pleads with them to end their controversies and come to God

1056 Madyan is torn by internal conflict Shu'aib comes as a peace maker not in virtue of his own wisdom but by an appeal to the truth righteousness and justice of God As we see later the real motives of his opponents were selfishness arrogance violence lawlessness and injustice But he appeals to their better nature and is prepared to argue on the basis that the party which wants to suppress those who believe in God's Message and in righteousness has some sincere mental difficulty in accepting Shu'aib's mission If 'he says to them 'that is the case do you think it justifies your intolerance your violence or your persecution? On the contrary events will prove by themselves who is right and who is wrong ' To the small band who believe in his mission and follow his teaching he would preach patience and perseverance His argument to them would be You have faith surely your faith is strong enough to sustain you in the hope that God's truth will triumph in the end there is no cause for despair or dejection "

How exactly these past experiences fit the times of our holy guide Muhammad! And it is for that analogy and that lesson that the stories of Noah Hūd Ṣāliḥ Lūṭ and Shu'aib are related to us—all different and yet all pointing to the great lessons in Muhammad's life

1057 See the argument in the last note God's decision may come partly in this very life either for the same generation or for succeeding generations by the logic of external events But in any case it is bound to come spiritually on a higher plane eventually when the righteous will be comforted and the sinners will be convinced of sin from their own inner conviction

88 The leaders, the arrogant  
Party among his people, said <sup>1058</sup>  
"Oh Shu'aib! we shall  
Certainly drive thee out  
Of our city—(thee) and those  
Who believe with thee,  
Or else ye (thou and they)  
Shall have to return  
To our ways and religion "  
He said "What! even  
Though we do detest them?

89 "We should indeed invent <sup>1059</sup>  
A lie against God,  
If we returned to your ways  
After God hath rescued  
Us therefrom, nor could we  
By any manner of means  
Return thereto unless it be  
As in the will and plan of God, <sup>1060</sup>  
Our Lord Our Lord  
Can reach out to the utmost  
Recesses of things by His  
knowledge  
In God is our trust  
Our Lord! Decide thou <sup>1061</sup>  
Between us and our people

٨٨- قَالَ الْمَلَأُ الَّذِينَ اسْتَكْبَرُوا  
مِنْ قَوْمِهِ لِنُخْرِجَكَ إِشْعِيبُ  
وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَعَكَ  
مِنْ قَرْيَتِنَا  
أَوْ لِنَعُودُنَّ فِي مِلَّتِنَا  
قَالَ أَوَلَوْ كُنَّا كَارِهِينَ ۝

٨٩- قَدْ افْتَرَيْنَا عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا  
إِنْ عُدْنَا فِي مِلَّتِكُمْ  
بَعْدَ إِدْجَانَا اللَّهُ مِنْهَا  
وَمَا يَكُونُ لَنَا أَنْ نَعُودَ فِيهَا  
إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ رَبُّنَا  
وَسِعَ رَبُّنَا كُلَّ شَيْءٍ عِلْمًا  
عَلَى اللَّهِ تَوَكَّلْنَا  
رَبُّنَا افْتَحْ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَ قَوْمِنَا

1058 The gentle all persuasive arguments of Shu'aib fell on hard hearts Their only reply was Turn him out!—him and his people When courtesy and a plea for toleration are pitted against bigotry what room is there for logic? But bigotry and unrighteousness have their own crooked ways of pretending to be tolerant O yes! they said we are very tolerant and long suffering! But we are for our country and religion Come back to the ways of our fathers and we shall graciously forgive you! Ways of their fathers!—they meant injustice and oppression high handedness to the poor and the weak fraud under cover of religion and so on! Perhaps the righteous were the poor and the weak Were they likely to love such ways? Perhaps there was implied a bribe as well as a threat If you come back and wink at our iniquities you shall have scraps of prosperity thrown at you If not out you go in disgrace!

1059 The answer of the righteous is threefold (1) Coming back is all very well But do you mean that we should practise the vices we detest? (2) "You want us to lie against our conscience and our God after we have seen the evil of your ways" (3) Neither bribes nor threats, nor specious appeals to patriotism or ancestral religion can move us the matter rests with God Whose will and pleasure we obey and on Whom alone we rely His knowledge will search out all your specious pretences

1060 This of course does not mean that any one can ever return to evil ways with God's consent Shu'aib has already emphatically repudiated the idea of returning "to your ways after God hath rescued us therefrom" But even if their ways had been good the human will he goes on to say has no data to rely upon and he and his followers would only be guided by God's Will and Plan

1061 Having answered the insincere quibblers among the godless the righteous turn to God in earnest prayer The endless controversies in this world about abstract or speculative things never end even where both sides are sincere in their beliefs The decision must be taken to God Who sits on the throne of Truth, and Whose decisions will therefore, be free from the errors and imperfections of all human judgment The sincere have nothing to fear in the appeal to Him, as their motives are pure

In truth, for thou  
Art the best to decide "

- 90 The leaders, the Unbelievers  
Among his people, said  
" If ye follow Shu'aib,  
Be sure ye are ruined " 1062

- 91 But the earthquake took them  
Unawares, and they lay  
Prostrate in their homes  
Before the morning ! 1063

- 92 The men who rejected  
Shu'aib became as if  
They had never been  
In the homes where they  
Had flourished the men  
Who rejected Shu'aib—  
It was they who were ruined !

- 93 So Shu'aib left them,  
Saying " Oh my people !  
I did indeed convey to you  
The Messages for which  
I was sent by my Lord  
I gave you good counsel,  
But how shall I lament

يَا حَقِّ وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الْفَاتِحِينَ ○

٩٠- وَقَالَ الْمَلَأُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ قَوْمِهِ  
لَئِنْ اتَّبَعْتُمْ شُعَيْبًا إِنَّكُمْ إِذًا لَخُسْرُونٌ ○

٩١- فَأَخَذَهُمُ الرَّجْفَةُ  
فَأَصْبَحُوا فِي دَارِهِمْ جَثِيمِينَ ○

٩٢- الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا شُعَيْبًا  
كَانَ لَمْ يَعْنُوا بِهَا  
الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا شُعَيْبًا  
كَانُوا هُمُ الْخُسْرَيْنِ ○

٩٣- فَتَوَلَّى عَنْهُمْ  
وَقَالَ يُقَوْمُ لَقَدْ أَبْلَغْتُكُمْ  
رِسَالَتِي رُبِّي وَنَصَحْتُ لَكُمْ  
فَكَيْفَ أَسَى

1062 The answer of the Unbelievers is characteristic. As all their bribes and subtleties have failed, they resort to threats which are worse than the argument of the stick. All right ' they say ' there is nothing but ruin before you ! ' That means that the Believers will be persecuted, held up to obloquy, ostracised and prevented from access to all means of honourable livelihood; their families and dependents will be insulted, reviled and tortured if they could but be got into the enemy's power; their homes destroyed and their names held up to ridicule and contempt even when they are gone. But as verse 92 says, their wicked designs recoiled on themselves: it was the wicked who were ruined and blotted out.

1063 The fate of the Madyan people is described in the same terms as that of the *Thamūd* in verse 78 above. An earthquake seized them by night and they were buried in their own homes, no longer to vex God's earth. But a supplementary detail is mentioned in xxvi. 189: the punishment of a day of overshadowing gloom which may be understood to mean a shower of ashes and cinders accompanying a volcanic eruption. Thus a day of terror drove them into their homes, and the earthquake finished them. The lament of Shu'aib in verse 93 is almost the same as that of *Ṣāliḥ* in verse 79 with two differences: (1) Shu'aib's messages attacked the many sins of his people (see n. 1055) and are therefore expressed in the plural while *Ṣāliḥ*'s fight was chiefly against selfish arrogance and his message is expressed in the singular; (2) the *Thamūd* were the more cultured people of the two, and perished in their own pride, as *Ṣāliḥ* said ' ye love not good counsellors ', the Midianites were a rougher people, and their minds were less receptive of argument or faith, as Shu'aib said, they were a people who ' refused to believe '.

Over a people who refuse  
To believe <sup>1064</sup>

## SECTION 12

- 94 ~~W~~ Whenever We sent a prophet  
To a town, We took up  
Its people in suffering  
And adversity, in order  
That they might learn humility <sup>1065</sup>

- 95 Then We changed their suffering  
Into prosperity, until they grew <sup>1066</sup>  
And multiplied, and began  
To say "Our fathers (too)  
Were touched by suffering  
And affluence" Behold!  
We called them to account  
Of a sudden, while they  
Realised not (their peril)

- 96 If the people of the towns  
Had but believed and feared  
God, We should indeed  
Have opened out to them

عَلَى قَوْمٍ كَافِرِينَ ۝

٩٤- وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا فِي قَرْيَةٍ مِّن نَّبِيٍّ  
إِلَّا أَخَذْنَا أَهْلَهَا بِالْبَأْسَاءِ  
وَالضَّرَاءِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَضُرَّعُونَ ۝

٩٥- نَحْبَدِّلُنَا مَكَانَ الشِّتَاءِ الْحَسَنَةَ  
حَتَّى عَفَوْا  
وَقَالُوا قَدْ مَسَّ آبَاءَنَا الضَّرَّاءُ  
وَالسَّرَّاءُ فَأَخَذْنَاهُمْ بَغْتَةً  
وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ۝

٩٦- وَلَوْ أَنَّ أَهْلَ الْقُرَىٰ آمَنُوا وَاتَّقَوْا  
لَفَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِم مَّا

1064 Can we get any idea of the chronological place of the destruction of the Midianites? In n 1053 (vii 85) we have discussed the geographical aspects. The following considerations will help us in getting some idea of their period. (1) The stories of Noah, Hud, ʿĀlih, Lūṭ and Shuʿaib seem to be in chronological order. Therefore Shuʿaib came after Abraham whose nephew Lūṭ was. (2) If Shuʿaib was in the fourth generation from Abraham (see n 1590 to xi 89) it would be impossible for him to have been a contemporary of Moses who came many centuries later. This difficulty is recognised by Ibn Kathīr and other classical commentators. (3) The identification of Shuʿaib with Jethro the father-in-law of Moses is without warrant (see n 1054 (vii 85)). (4) Shuʿaib must have been before Moses (see vii 103). (5) The Midianites who were destroyed by Moses and by Gideon after him (n 1053) were local remnants as we may speak of the Jews at the present day but their existence as a nation in their original home lands seems to have ended before Moses: they became as if they had never been in the homes where they had flourished (vii 92). (6) Josephus, Eusebius and Ptolemy mention a town of Madyan, but it was not of any importance (n 1053). (7) After the first centuries of the Christian era Madyan as a town appears as an unimportant place resting on its past.

1065 Man was originally created pure. The need of a prophet arises when there is some corruption and iniquity which he is sent to combat. His coming means much trial and suffering, especially to those who join him in his protest against wrong. Even so peaceful a prophet as Jesus said: 'I came not to send peace but a sword' (Matt x 34). But it is all in God's Plan, for we must learn humility if we would be worthy of Him.

1066 God gives enough rope to the sinful. They grow and multiply, and become scornful. Neither suffering nor affluence teaches them the lessons which they are meant to learn, viz. patience and humility, gratitude and kindness to others. They take adversity and prosperity alike as a matter of chance. 'Oh yes!' they say "such things have happened in all ages! Our fathers had such experience before us, and our sons will have them after us. Thus goes on the world for all time!" But does it? What about the Plan of the Architect? They are found napping when Nemesis overtakes them in the midst of their impious tomfoolery!

All kinds of blessings  
From heaven and earth ,  
But they rejected (the truth),  
And We brought them  
To book for their misdeeds

- 97 Did the people of the towns  
Feel secure against the coming <sup>1067</sup>  
Of Our wrath by night  
While they were asleep ?

- 98 Or else did they feel  
Secure against its coming  
In broad daylight while they  
Played about (care-free) ?

- 99 Did they then feel secure  
Against the Plan of God ?—  
But no one can feel  
Secure from the Plan  
Of God, except those  
(Doomed) to ruin <sup>1068</sup>

بَرَكَاتٍ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ  
وَلَكِنْ كَذَّبُوا

فَأَخَذْنَا لَهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ ○

٩٧- أَفَأَمِنَ أَهْلُ الْقُرَى أَنْ يَأْتِيَهُمْ  
بَأْسُنَا بَيَاتًا وَهُمْ نَائِمُونَ ○

٩٨- أَوْ أَمِنَ أَهْلُ الْقُرَى أَنْ يَأْتِيَهُمْ  
بَأْسُنَا ضُحًى وَهُمْ يُلْعَبُونَ ○

٩٩- أَفَأَمِنُوا مَكْرَ اللَّهِ  
فَلَا يَأْمَنُ مَكْرَ اللَّهِ  
إِلَّا الْقَوْمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ ○

C 86 – While the story of the prophets who preached  
(VII 100 157) In vain to their people pre figures

The struggles in the early careers  
Of all apostles, the story of Moses,—  
His struggles with an alien and arrogant  
People, his final deliverance  
Of his people from foreign domination,  
And his leading them within sight  
Of the Promised Land, in spite  
Of the forces that resisted,— pre figures  
The early struggles and eventual triumph  
Of Muhammad the Holy Apostle of God

1067 This and the two following verses should be read together. They furnish a commentary on the story of the five prophets that has already been related. God's wrath may come by night or by day whether people are arrogantly defying God's laws or are sunk in lethargy or vain dreams of unreality. Who can escape God's Plan, and who can feel themselves outside it except those who are seeking their own ruin ?

1068 This closes that chapter of the narrative which deals with apostles who were rejected by their own people, but who stood firm on God's message and were able to rescue a remnant who believed. In each case there were special circumstances and special besetting sins, which have been explained in the notes. The nations which as a body could not be won over to God's Law perished. So far we have been dealing with the corruptions and iniquities within each nation. In the story of Moses we have first a struggle against the bondage of Egypt, one of the foremost powers then in the world, the rescue of the Israelites and their wanderings, and their proving themselves unworthy and being left to wander in a new sense when they rejected the new Prophet (Muhammad) who came to renew God's Message.

## SECTION 13

100 **T**o those who inherit  
The earth in succession  
To its (previous) possessors,  
Is it not a guiding (lesson)  
That, if We so willed,  
We could punish them (too)  
For their sins, and seal up  
Their hearts so that they  
Could not hear? <sup>1069</sup>

101 Such were the towns  
Whose story We (thus)  
Relate unto thee  
There came indeed to them  
Their apostles with clear (Signs)  
But they would not believe  
What they had rejected  
before <sup>1070</sup>  
Thus doth God seal up  
The hearts of those  
Who reject Faith

102 Most of them We found not  
Men (true) to their covenant  
But most of them We found  
Rebellious and disobedient

103 **T**hen after them We sent  
Moses with Our Signs  
To Pharaoh and his chiefs,  
But they wrongfully rejected <sup>them</sup>  
So see what was the end  
Of those who made mischief

١٠٠- أَوَلَمْ يَهْدِ لِلَّذِينَ يَرِثُونَ الْأَرْضَ  
مِنْ بَعْدِ أَهْلِهَا  
أَنْ لَوْ نَشَاءُ أَصَبْنَاهُمْ بِذُنُوبِهِمْ  
وَنَضْبَعُ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ  
فَهُمْ لَا يَسْمَعُونَ ○

١٠١- تِلْكَ الْقُرَى  
نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ مِنْ أَنْبَاءِهَا  
وَلَقَدْ جَاءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُهُم بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ  
فَمَا كَانُوا إِلَّا يَوْمُوا بِمَا كَذَّبُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ  
كَذَلِكَ يَطْبَعُ اللَّهُ  
عَلَى قُلُوبِ الْكَافِرِينَ ○

١٠٢- وَمَا وَجَدْنَا إِلَّا أَكْثَرَهُمْ مِنْ عَهْدٍ  
وَإِنْ وَجَدْنَا أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَفَاسِقِينَ ○

١٠٣- ثُمَّ بَعَثْنَا مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ مُوسَى بِآيَاتِنَا  
إِلَى فِرْعَوْنَ وَمَلَئِهِ  
فَظَلَمُوا بِهَا  
فَانْظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُفْسِدِينَ ○

1069 The stories which have been related should give a warning to present and future generations which have inherited the land, the power, or the experience of the past. They should know that if they fall into the same sins they will meet with the same fate when through their contumacy their hearts are hardened, they do not listen to the advice that falls on their ears.

1070 Those who have heard the Message and rejected it find it more difficult afterwards to retrace their steps. Evil has blocked the channels of God's grace to them. It begins with their breaking their Covenant with God, with each step afterwards they fall deeper and deeper into the mire.



104 Moses<sup>1071</sup> said "Oh  
Pharaoh<sup>1072</sup>

I am an apostle from  
The Lord of the Worlds,—

١٠٤- وَقَالَ مُوسَىٰ يُعْرِضُونَ  
لِي رَسُولٌ مِّن رَّبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ۝

105. One for whom it is right  
To say nothing but truth  
About God Now have I  
Come unto you (people), from<sup>1073</sup>  
Your Lord, with a clear (Sign)  
So let the Children of Israel  
Depart along with me "

١٠٥- حَفِيقٌ عَلَىٰ أَن لَا أَقُولَ  
عَلَى اللَّهِ إِلَّا الْحَقُّ ۖ  
قَدْ جِئْتُكُمْ بِبَيِّنَاتٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ  
فَأَرْسِلْ مَعِيَ بَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ ۝

106 (Pharaoh) said " If indeed  
Thou hast come with a Sign,

١٠٦- قَالَ إِن كُنتَ جِئْتَ بِآيَةٍ

1071 The story of Moses is told in many places in the Holy Qur'ān with a special lesson in each context. In 11:49-71 the story is an appeal to the Jews from their own scripture and traditions to show their true place in the religious history of mankind and how they forfeited it. Here we have an instructive parallelism in that story to the story of Muhammad's mission—how both these men of God had to fight against (1) a foreign foe arrogant unjust faithless, and superstitious and (2) against the same class of internal foe among their own people. Both of them won through. In the case of Moses the foreign foe was Pharaoh and his Egyptians who boasted of their earlier and superior civilisation. In the case of the Prophet Muhammad the foreign foes were the Jews themselves and the Christians of his day. Moses led his people nearly to the Land of Promise in spite of rebellions among his own people. Muhammad succeeded completely in overcoming the resistance of his own people by his own virtues and firmness of character and by the guidance of God. What was a hope when these Meccan verses were revealed became an accomplishment before the end of his life and mission on earth.

1072 Pharaoh (Arabic *Farāun*) is a dynastic title, not the name of any particular king in Egypt. It has been traced to the ancient Hieroglyphic words *Per āa* which mean Great House. The *ph* in *Pharaoh* is an infirm letter added in the process of Arabisation. Who was the Pharaoh in the story of Moses? If the Inscriptions had helped us, we could have answered with some confidence but unfortunately the Inscriptions fail us. It is probable that it was an early Pharaoh of the XVIIIth Dynasty say Thothmes I about 1540 B.C. See appendix IV on Egyptian Chronology and Israel printed at the end of this Surah.

1073 Notice that Moses in addressing Pharaoh and the Egyptians claims his mission to be not from *his* God or *his* people's God but from *your* Lord from the Lord of the Worlds. And his mission is not to *his* people only. I come unto *you* (Egyptian people) from *your* Lord. The spirit of our version is entirely different from the spirit of the same story as told in the Old Testament (Exod chapters 1 to xv). In Exod iii:18 the mission of Moses is to be expressed as from the Lord God of the Hebrews.

The essence of the whole Islamic story is this. Joseph's sufferings and good fortune were not merely a story in a romance. Joseph was a prophet. His sufferings and his subsequent rise to power and position in Egypt were to be a lesson (a) to his wicked brothers who sold him into slavery, (b) to his people who were stricken with famine and found a welcome in Egypt and (c) to the Egyptians who were arrogant over their high material civilisation but had yet to be taught the pure faith of Abraham. Israel prospered in Egypt and stayed there perhaps two to four centuries (Renan allows only one century). Times changed and the racial bigotry of the Egyptians showed its head again and Israel was oppressed. Moses was raised up with a threefold mission again (a) to learn all the learning of the Egyptians and preach God's Truth to them as one who had been brought up among themselves (b) to unite and reclaim his own people, and (c) to rescue them and lead them to a new world, which was to open out their spiritual horizon and lead them to the Psalms of David and the glories of Solomon.

Show it forth,—  
If thou tellest the truth " 1071.

مَا تَرَاهَا إِن كُنْتَ مِنَ الصَّادِقِينَ ۝

- 107 Then (Moses) threw his rod,  
And behold! it was  
A serpent, plain (for all to see) ! 1075

١٠٧- فَأَلْقَى عَصَاهُ

فَإِذَا هِيَ ثُعْبَانٌ مُّبِينٌ ۝

- 108 And he drew out his hand,  
And behold! it was white  
To all beholders ! 1076

١٠٨- وَنَزَعَ يَدَهُ

فَإِذَا هِيَ بَيْضَاءُ لِلنَّاظِرِينَ ۝

#### SECTION 14

- 109 Said the Chiefs of the people  
Of Pharaoh " This is indeed  
A sorcerer well-versed

١٠٩- قَالَ الْمَلَأُ مِنْ قَوْمِ فِرْعَوْنَ

إِنَّ هَذَا سَاحِرٌ عَلِيمٌ ۝

- 110 " His plan is to get you out  
Of your land then  
What is it ye counsel ? " 1077

١١٠- يُرِيدُ أَنْ يُخْرِجَكُمْ مِنْ أَرْضِكُمْ

فَمَاذَا نَأْمُرُونَ ۝

1074 The ensuing dialogue shows the psychology on the two sides Pharaoh is sitting in his Darbar with his ministers and chiefs around him In their arrogance they are only amused at the effrontery and apparent revolt of the Israelite leaders and they rely upon their own superior worldly power aided by the magic which was a part of the Egyptian religion Confronting them stand two men Moses with his mission from God and his brother Aaron who was his lieutenant They are confident not in their own powers but in the mission they had received The first thing they have to do is to act on the subjective mind of the Egyptians and by methods which by God's miracle show that Egyptian magic was nothing before the true power of God

1075 The serpent played a large part in Egyptian mythology The great sun god Ra won a great victory over the serpent Apophis typifying the victory of light over darkness Many of their gods and goddesses took the forms of snakes to impress their foes with terror Moses's rod as a type of a serpent at once appealed to the Egyptian mentality The contempt which the Egyptians had entertained in their minds before was converted into terror Here was some one who could control the reptile which their great god Ra himself had such difficulty in overcoming!

1076 But the second Sign displayed by Moses was even more puzzling to the Egyptians Moses drew out his hand from the folds of the garments on his breast and it was white and shining as with divine light! This was to counter any suggestions of evil which the serpent might have created This was no work of evil—of black magic or a trick or illusion His hand was transfigured—with a light which no Egyptian sorcerers could produce In Islam the 'white hand' of Moses has passed into a proverb for a symbol of divine glory dazzling to the beholders

1077 The two Signs had the desired effect on the Egyptians They were impressed, but they judged them by their own standards They thought to themselves These are ordinary sorcerers let us search out our best sorcerers and show them that they have superior power But like all worldly people they began to fear for their own power and possessions It was far from Moses's intention to drive out the Egyptians from their own land He merely wanted to end the Egyptian oppression But the Egyptians had a guilty conscience, and they judged other people's motives by their own They discussed the matter in Council on quite wrong premises

111 They said "Keep him  
And his brother in suspense  
(For a while), and send  
To the cities men to collect—

112 And bring up to thee  
All (our) sorcerers well-versed " 1078

113 So there came  
The sorcerers to Pharaoh  
They said, "Of course  
We shall have a (suitable)  
Reward if we win " 1079

114 He said "Yea, (and more),—  
For ye shall in that case  
Be (raised to posts)  
Nearest (to my person) "

115 They said "Oh Moses !  
Wilt thou throw (first),  
Or shall we have  
The (first) throw ? "

116 Said Moses "Throw ye (first) "  
So when they threw,  
They bewitched the eyes  
Of the people, and struck  
Terror into them for they  
Showed a great (feat of) magic 1080

١١١- قَالُوا اَرْجِهْ وَاَخَاهُ  
وَاَرْسِلْ فِي الْمَدَائِنِ حٰشِرِيْنَ ۝

١١٢- يَا نُوْكَ بِكُلِّ سٰحِرٍ عَلِيْمٍ ۝

١١٣- وَجَآءَ السَّحَرَةُ فِرْعَوْنَ  
قَالُوْا اِنَّ لَنَا لَآخِرًا  
اِنْ كُنَّا نَحْنُ الْغٰلِبِيْنَ ۝

١١٤- قَالَ نَعَمْ  
وَاَتَكُمْ لِيْنِ الْمُقَرَّبِيْنَ ۝

١١٥- قَالُوْا يٰمُوسٰى اِمَّا اَنْ تُلْقٰى  
وَاِمَّا اَنْ تَكُوْنَ مَحْنُ الْمَلٰٓئِكِيْنَ ۝

١١٦- قَالَ اَلْقُوْا  
فَلَمَّا اَلْقَوْا سَحَرُوْا اَعْيُنَ النَّاسِ  
وَاَسْرَضُوْهُمْ وَاَخَاءُ وَاِسْحٰرَ عَظِيْمٍ ۝

1078 The advice of the Council to Pharaoh shows a misreading of the situation. They were in a panic about what the magic of this evidently powerful sorcerer could do against them. So they advised the Pharaoh to summon their most powerful sorcerers from all over the country and in the meantime to hold Moses and Aaron in suspense – neither to yield to them nor definitely to oppose them. The men of God could well afford to wait. Time is always in favour of Truth.

1079 The most noted sorcerers of Pharaoh came. Their art was built up on trickery and imposture and the first thing they could think of was to make a selfish bargain for themselves. The Pharaoh and his Council would in their present state of panic agree to anything. And so they did. Pharaoh not only promised them any rewards they desired if they foiled the strange power of these men but he also promised them the highest dignities round his own person. And so the contest begins, with due observance of the amenities observed by combatants before they come to close grips.

1080 Moses and his brother Aaron were pitted against the most skilful magic men of Egypt but they were calm and confident and let the magic men have their innings first. As is usual in this world, the magicians' trickery made a great impression on the people but when Moses threw his rod the illusion was broken and the falsehood was all shown up. In the Old Testament story (Exod. vii 10-12) it was Aaron that threw the rod and he threw it before the magicians. Aaron's rod became a serpent. Then the magicians threw their rods and they became serpents but Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods. The story given to us is more dramatic and less literal. We are told in general terms that Moses first allowed the magic men to play their tricks. The rod of Moses was the symbol of his authority. It must have been a simple shepherd's crook with which he used to feed his flocks. With God's grace behind him, he was able to expose all false trickery and establish the Truth.

117 We put it into Moses's mind  
By inspiration " Throw (now)  
Thy rod " and behold !  
It swallows up straightway  
All the falsehoods  
Which they fake !

١١٧- وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَىٰ مُوسَىٰ  
أَنْ أَلْقِ عَصَاكَ  
فَإِذَا هِيَ تَلْقَفُ مَا نَأْفِكُونَ ۝

118 Thus truth was confirmed,  
And all that they did  
Was made of no effect

١١٨- فَوَقَّعَ الْحَقُّ  
وَبَطَلَ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ۝

119 So the (great ones) were vanquished  
There and then, and were  
Made to look small <sup>1081</sup>

١١٩- فَغَلَبُوا هَٰذَاكَ  
وَأَنقَلَبُوا صَغِيرِينَ ۝

120 But the sorcerers fell down  
Prostrate in adoration,

١٢٠- وَأَلْقَى السَّحَرَةُ سِحْرَهُنَّ ۝

121 Saying " We believe  
In the Lord of the Worlds,—

١٢١- قَالُوا أَمَّا بِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ۝

122 " The Lord of Moses and Aaron "

١٢٢- رَبِّ مُوسَىٰ وَهَارُونَ ۝

123 Said Pharaoh ' " Believe ye  
In Him before I give  
You permission ? Surely  
This is a trick which ye  
Have planned in the City  
To drive out its people  
But soon shall ye know  
(The consequences) <sup>1082</sup>

١٢٣- قَالَ فِرْعَوْنُ أَمِنْتُمْ بِهِ  
قَبْلَ أَنْ أَدْنَىٰ لَكُمْ إِنَّ هَٰذَا الْمَكْرُ  
مَكْرُتُهُ فِي الْمَدِينَةِ  
لَتُخْرِجُوا مِنْهَا أَهْلَهَا فَسَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ ۝

1081 The proud ones of the Court—Pharaoh and his chiefs—were hard hearted and the exposure of the imposture only made them wreak their rage on those whom they could reach. On the other hand the effect on the humbler ones—those who had been made the dupes and instruments of the imposture—was quite different. Their conscience was awakened. They fell down to the ground in adoration of the Lord of the Worlds and confessed their faith.

1082 Pharaoh and his Court were doubly angry, first because they were made to look small when confronted by the power of God and secondly because their dupes and instruments were snatched away from them. These men the sorcerers at once recognised the Signs of God and in their case the mission of Moses and Aaron was fulfilled. They turned back on their past life of imposture, make believe, false worship and oppression of the weak and confessed the One true God. As usually happens, hardened sinners resent all the more the saving of any of their companions from sin and error. Judging other people's motives by their own, they accuse them of duplicity and if they have the power they take cruel revenge. Here the Pharaoh threatens the repentant sinners with the extreme punishment for treason and apostasy (cutting off of hands and feet combined with an ignominious death on the cross as in the case of the worst malefactors). But they remained firm and prayed to God for patience and constancy. Probably their influence spread quietly in the commonalty. Ultimately it appeared on the Throne itself in the person of Amenophis IV about five or six generations afterwards. See Appendix V on Egyptian Religion printed at the end of this Sûra.

- 124 " Be sure I will cut off  
Your hands and your feet  
On opposite sides, and I  
Will cause you all  
To die on the cross "
- 125 They said "For us,  
We are but sent back  
Unto our Lord
- 126 " But thou dost wreak  
Thy vengeance on us  
Simply because we believed  
In the Signs of our Lord  
When they reached us '  
Our Lord ' pour out on us  
Patience and constancy, and take  
Our souls unto Thee  
As Muslims who bow  
To Thy Will ' " 1083

## SECTION 15

- 127 Said the chiefs of Pharaoh's  
People "Wilt thou leave  
Moses and his people,  
To spread mischief in the land,  
And to abandon thee  
And thy gods ?" He said  
" Their male children will we  
Slay, (only) their females  
Will we save alive,  
And we have over them

١٢٣-لَا قُطِعْنَ أَيْدِيَكُمْ وَأَرْجُلُكُمْ  
مِنْ خِلَافٍ  
ثُمَّ لَأَصْلِبَنَّكُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ○

١٢٥-قَالُوا  
إِنَّا إِلَى رَبِّنَا مُنْقَلِبُونَ ۝

١٢٦-وَمَا تَنْقِمُ مِنَّا  
إِلَّا أَنْ آمَنَّا بِآيَاتِ رَبِّنَا  
لَمَّا جَاءَتْنَا  
رَبَّنَا أَفْرِغْ عَلَيْنَا صَبْرًا  
وَتَوْفِّقْنَا مُسْلِمِينَ ۝

١٢٦

١٢٤-وَقَالَ الْمَلَأُ مِنَ قَوْمِ فِرْعَوْنَ  
اتَّذِرْ مُوسَى وَقَوْمَهُ لِيُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ  
وَيَذَرُكَ وَالْهَنَكَ  
قَالَ سَتَعْلَمُ أَسَاءَهُمْ  
وَلَنَسْجِي نِسَاءَهُمْ وَإِنَّا فَوْقَهُمْ

1083 These Egyptians by their patience and constancy show that their repentance was true. Thus in their case the mission of Moses was fulfilled directly and their number must have amounted to a considerable figure. They were martyrs to their faith and their martyrdom affected their nation in two ways. In the first place as they were the pick of those who practised the false superstition in Egypt their conversion and disappearance dealt a staggering blow to the whole system. Secondly the indirect effect of their martyrdom on the commonalty of Egypt must have been far greater than can be measured by numbers. The banner of God was planted and the silent spiritual fight must have gone on ever since though history in recording outward events is silent on the slow and gradual processes of transformation undergone by Egyptian religion. From a chroitic pantheon of animals and animal gods the worship of the sun and the heavenly bodies, and the worship of the Pharaoh as the embodiment of power they gradually came to realise the oneness and mercy of the true God. After many glimpses of Monotheism on Egyptian soil itself, the Gospel of Jesus reached them, and eventually Islam.

(Power) irresistible " 1084

○ قَاهِرُونَ

128 Said Moses to his people  
 " Pray for help from God,  
 And (wait) in patience and  
 constancy  
 For the earth is God's,  
 To give as a heritage  
 To such of his servants  
 As He pleaseth, and the end  
 Is (best) for the righteous <sup>1085</sup>

١٢٨- قَالَ مُوسَى لِقَوْمِهِ  
 اسْعَيْنَا بِاللّٰهِ  
 وَاصْبِرُوا إِنَّ الْأَرْضَ لِلّٰهِ  
 يُورِثُهَا مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ  
 وَالْعَاقِبَةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ ○

129 They said " We have had  
 (Nothing but) trouble, both before  
 And after thou camest <sup>1086</sup>  
 To us " He said  
 " It may be that your Lord  
 Will destroy your enemy  
 And make you inheritors <sup>1087</sup>  
 In the earth, that so  
 He may try you  
 By your deeds "

١٢٩- قَالُوا أَوَؤْذِينَا مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تَأْتِيَنَا  
 وَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جِئْتَنَا  
 قَالَ عَلَىٰ رَبِّكُمْ أَنْ يُهْلِكَ عَدُوَّكُمْ  
 وَيَسْتَخْلِفَكُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ  
 فَيَنْظُرَ كَيْفَ تَعْمَلُونَ ○

## SECTION 16

130 We punished the people  
 Of Pharaoh with years

١٣٠- وَلَقَدْ أَخَذْنَا آلَ فِرْعَوْنَ بِالسِّنِينَ

1084 Pharaoh's order against the sorcerers was drastic enough. But his Council is not satisfied. What about Moses and the Israelites? They had a seeming victory and will now be more mischievous than ever. They appeal to Pharaoh's vanity and his superstition and sense of power. If you leave them alone they say where will be your authority? You and your gods will be defied! Pharaoh has a ready answer. He was really inwardly cowed by the apparent power of Moses. He dared not openly act against him. But he had already before the birth of Moses passed a cunning order to destroy the whole people of Israel. Through the instrumentality of midwives (Exod. 1:15) all the male children were to be destroyed and the females would then be for the Egyptians. The race of Israel would thus be at an end. This order was still in force and would remain in force until the despised race was absorbed. But Egyptian cunning and wickedness had no power against God's Plan for those who had faith. See verse 129 below.

1085 Notice the contrast between the arrogant tone of Pharaoh and the humility and faith taught by Moses. In the end the arrogance was humbled and humility and faith were protected and advanced.

1086 There is a slight note of querulousness in the people's answer. But Moses allays it by his own example and courage and his vision of the future which was amply fulfilled in time. See verse 137 below.

1087 The Israelites despised and enslaved were to be rescued and made rulers in Palestine. David and Solomon were great kings and played a notable part in history. But the greatness of Israel was conditional. They were to be judged by their deeds. When they fell from grace, other people were given honour and power. And so it came to be the turn of the Arab race, and so on. God gives His gifts to those who are righteous and obey His Law.

(Of drought) and shortness  
Of crops, that they might  
Call God to remembrance

- 131 But when good (times) came,  
They said, "This is due  
To us," when gripped  
By calamity, they ascribed it  
To evil omens connected  
With Moses and those with him !  
Behold ! in truth the omens  
Of evil are theirs <sup>1088</sup>  
In God's sight, but most  
Of them do not understand !

- 132 They said (to Moses)  
"Whatever be the Signs  
Thou bringest, to work  
Therewith thy sorcery on us, <sup>1089</sup>  
We shall never believe  
In thee "

- 133 So We sent (plagues) on them  
Wholesale Death, <sup>1090</sup>  
Locusts, Lice, Frogs,  
And Blood Signs openly <sup>1091</sup>  
Self-explained but they  
Were steeped in arrogance,—  
A people given to sin

- 134 Every time the Penalty  
Fell on them, they said

وَنَقِصَ مِنَ الثَّمَرَاتِ  
لَعَلَّهُمْ يَذْكُرُونَ ○

١٣١- فَاِذَا جَاءَتْهُمْ الْحَسَنَةُ  
قَالُوا النَّارُ هَذِهِ وَإِنْ تُصِيبُهُمْ سَيِّئَةٌ  
يَطَّكُرُوا مُسُوْسِي وَمَنْ مَعَهُ  
اِلَّا اِسْمَاعِيْلُ طَيْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ  
وَلَكِنَّ اَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُوْنَ ○

١٣٢- وَقَالُوا مَهْمَا تَاْتِنَا بِهِ مِنْ اٰيَةٍ  
لِّتَسْحَرَنَا بِهَا  
فَمَا نَحْنُ لَكَ بِمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ○

١٣٣- فَارْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمُ الطُّوفَانَ  
وَالْجَرَادَ وَالْقُمَّلَ وَالضَّفَادِعَ  
وَالْدَّمَ اٰيَاتٍ مُّفَصَّلَاتٍ  
فَاَسْتَكْبَرُوا وَكَانُوا قَوْمًا مُّجْرِمِيْنَ ○  
١٣٤- وَلَمَّا وَقَعَ عَلَيْهِمُ الرِّجْزُ قَالُوا

1088 Their superstition ascribed the punishment of their own wickedness to some evil omen. They thought Moses and his people brought them ill luck. They did not look within themselves to see the root of evil and the cause of their punishment! So it happens in all ages. People blame the righteous for something which they do, different from other men instead of searching out their own lapses from rectitude, which are punished by God.

1089 A type of obstinacy and resistance to God's message. As they believed in sorcery and magic they thought anything unusual was but sorcery and magic and hardened their hearts against Truth.

1090 *Tūfan* = a widespread calamity causing wholesale death and destruction. It may be a flood or a typhoon or an epidemic among men or cattle. Perhaps the last is meant, if we may interpret by the Old Testament story (Exod. ix. 3, 9, 15, xii. 29).

1091 In xvii. 101, the reference is to nine Clear Signs. These are (1) the Rod (vii. 107), (2) the Radiant Hand (vii. 108), (3) the years of drought or shortage of water (vii. 130), (4) short crops (vii. 130), and the five mentioned in this verse, viz., (5) epidemics among men and beasts, (6) locusts, (7) lice, (8) frogs, and (9) the water turning to blood.

"Oh Moses! on our behalf  
Call on thy Lord in virtue  
Of His promise to thee  
If thou wilt remove  
The Penalty from us,  
We shall truly believe in thee,  
And we shall send away  
The Children of Israel  
With thee " 1092

135 But every time We removed  
The Penalty from them  
According to a fixed term  
Which they had to fulfil,— 1093  
Behold! they broke their word!

136 So We exacted retribution  
From them We drowned <sup>them</sup> 1094  
In the sea, because they  
Rejected Our Signs, and failed  
To take warning from them 1095

137 And We made a people,  
Considered weak (and of no  
<sup>account</sup>),  
Inheritors of lands  
In both East and West,—

يَسْأَلُ اِدْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ  
بِمَا عَاهَدَ عِنْدَكَ  
لَئِنْ كَشَفْتَ عَنَّا الرِّجْزَ  
لَنُؤْمِنَنَّ لَكَ

وَلَنُرْسِلَنَّ مَعَكَ بَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ ۝

١٣٥- فَلَمَّا كَشَفْنَا عَنْهُمْ الرِّجْزَ  
إِلَى أَجَلٍ

هُم بِالْعُتُوِّ إِذَا هُمْ يَنْكُتُونَ ۝

١٣٦- فَاسْتَقَمْنَا مِنْهُمْ فَأَغْرَقْنَاهُمْ فِي الْيَمِّ  
بِأَنَّهُمْ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا  
وَكَانُوا عَنْهَا غَافِلِينَ ۝

١٣٧- وَأَوْزَيْنَا الْقَوْمَ الَّذِينَ كَانُوا  
يُسْتَضَعُونَ مَشَارِقَ الْأَرْضِ

1092 The demand of Moses was two fold (1) come to God and cease from oppression and (2) let me take Israel out of Egypt At first it was laughed at and rejected with scorn When the Plagues came for punishment each time the Egyptians suffered they promised amendment and begged Moses to intercede and cause the plague to cease But every time it ceased they went back to their evil attitude until the final retribution came This is a type of the sinner's attitude for all times

1093 The intercession of Moses was limited to prayer Each plague or penalty had its appointed term in God's decree That term was duly fulfilled before the plague ceased God's law is firm it does not vacillate like the human will The intercession only meant two things (1) that God's name was invoked and His presence duly brought home to the mind and heart of the sinner who promised repentance and (2) that the sinner was given a further chance if the prayer was accepted This again is a universal truth

1094 When at last Pharaoh let Israel go they selected not the highway to Canaan, along the Mediterranean and by Gaza because they were unarmed and would have encountered immediate opposition there but by way of the wilderness of Sinai They had to cross the marshy end of the Red Sea which they did while Pharaoh's host which came in pursuit was drowned Cf II 50

1095 Where was the Council of Pharaoh held in which Moses addressed Pharaoh? Egypt's primary capital in the XVIIIth Dynasty was Thebes (=No Ammon) but that was more than 400 miles to the south of the Delta in whose corner Israel dwelt Memphis on the apex of the Delta a little south of where Cairo is now was also over 100 miles from Israel's habitations The interview must have been either in a Palace near Goshen where the Israelites dwelt, or in Zoan (=Tanis) the Deltaic capital built by a former dynasty which was of course still available for the reigning dynasty, and which was not far from the Jewish settlement



Lands whereon We sent  
Down Our blessings  
The fair promise of thy Lord  
Was fulfilled for the Children  
Of Israel, because they had  
Patience and constancy,  
And We levelled to the ground  
The great Works and fine  
Buildings  
Which Pharaoh and his people  
Erected (with such pride) <sup>1096</sup>

وَمَغَارِبَهَا الَّتِي بَرَكْنَا فِيهَا  
وَكُنْتُ كَلِمَتُ رَبِّكَ الْحُسْنَى  
عَلَى بَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ ۚ  
بِنَا صَبَرُوا  
وَدَمَرْنَا مَا كَانَ يَصْنَعُ فِرْعَوْنُ وَ  
قَوْمُهُ وَمَا كَانُوا يَعْرِشُونَ ۝

138 **W**e took the Children of  
Israel  
(With safety) across the sea  
They came upon a people  
Devoted entirely to some idols <sup>1097</sup>  
They had They said  
"Oh Moses! fashion for us  
A god like unto the gods  
They have" He said ۞

۝۳۸- وَجَاوَزْنَا بِبَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ الْبَحْرَ  
فَاتَّوَا عَلَى قَوْمٍ يَعْكُفُونَ عَلَى أَصْنَامِهِمْ  
لَهُمْ قَالُوا يُؤْسَى اجْعَلْ لَنَا  
إِلَهًا كَمَا لَهُمُ إِلَهَةٌ ۖ قَالَ

1096 Israel which was despised became a great and glorious nation under Solomon. He had goodly territory and was doubly blest. His land and people were prosperous and he was blessed with wisdom from God. His sway and his fame spread east and west. And thus God's promise to Israel was fulfilled. Note that Syria and Palestine had once been under the sway of Egypt. At the same time the proud and rebellious Pharaoh and his people were brought low. The splendid monuments which they had erected with so much skill and pride were mingled with the dust. Their great cities—Thebes (or No Ammon) Memphis (or Noph, sacred to the Bull of Osiris) and the other splendid cities became as if they had not existed and archaeologists have had to dig up their ruins from the sands. The splendid monuments—temples, palaces, tombs, statues, columns and stately structures of all kinds—were buried in the sands. Even monuments like the Great Sphinx which seem to defy the ages were partly buried in the sands and owe their rescue to the comparatively recent researches of archaeologists. As late as 1743 Richard Pococke in his *Travels in Egypt* (p. 41) remarked: "Most of those pyramids are very much ruined."

The contrast between Egypt and Israel is one part of the story in the march of time. Israel also was found unworthy and in course of time the Arabs whom they despised as Ishmaelites became their masters. The Jews in their Ghettos in Europe suffered much persecution. Nor are they out of the wood yet. If the Pogroms of the Slavs against them have ceased, their fate in Nazi Germany is the talk of the world. Nor had the Arabs or Turks or any nation a perpetual lease of power from God. The test is righteousness and the Muslim virtues taught in the Universal Religion of faith and right conduct.

1097 Who were these people? We are now in the Sinai Peninsula. Two conjectures are possible. (1) The Amalekites of the Sinai Peninsula were at perpetual war with the Israelites. They were probably an idolatrous nation, but we have very little knowledge of their cult. (2) From Egyptian history we know that Egypt had worked from very ancient times some copper mines in Sinai. An Egyptian settlement may have been here. Like all mining camps it contained from the beginning the dregs of the population. When the mines ceased to be worked, the settlement or what remained of it must have degenerated further. Cut off from civilisation its cult must have become still narrower without the refining influences which a progressive nation applies even to its idolatry. Perhaps Apis, the sacred bull of Memphis, lost all its allegorical meaning for them and only gross and superstitious rites remained among them. The text speaks of *some idols they had*, implying that they had merely a detached fragment of a completer religion. This was a snare in the path of the Israelites, whom many generations of slavery in Egypt had debased into ignorance and superstition.

"Surely ye are a people  
Without knowledge

- 139 "As to these folk,—  
The cult they are in  
Is (but) a fragment of a ruin,<sup>1098</sup>  
And vain is the (worship)  
Which they practise "

- 140 He said "Shall I seek for you  
A god other than the (true)  
God, when it is God  
Who hath endowed you  
With gifts above the nations? "

- 141 And remember We rescued you  
From Pharaoh's people,  
Who afflicted you with  
The worst of penalties,  
Who slew your male children  
And saved alive your females  
In that was a momentous  
Trial from your Lord<sup>1099</sup>

#### SECTION 17

- 142 We appointed for Moses  
Thirty nights, and completed  
(The period) with ten (more)  
Thus was completed the term  
(Of communion) with his Lord,<sup>1100</sup>  
Forty nights And Moses  
Had charged his brother Aaron  
(Before he went up)

إِنَّكُمْ قَوْمٌ تَجْهَلُونَ ○

١٣٩- إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا مِتَابٌ

مَّا هُمْ فِيهِ

وَبُطْلٌ مَّا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ○

١٤٠- قَالَ أَغَيْرَ اللَّهِ

أَبْغَيْكُمْ إِلَهًا

وَهُوَ فَضَّلَكُمْ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ ○

١٤١- وَإِذْ أَنْجَيْنَاكُمْ مِنْ آلِ فِرْعَوْنَ

يَسُومُونَكُمْ سُوءَ الْعَذَابِ

يَقْتُلُونَ أَبْنَاءَكُمْ وَيَسْتَحْيُونَ نِسَاءَكُمْ

وَإِنَّ ذَلِكَ لَكُم بَلَاءٌ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ عَظِيمٌ ۝

١٤٢- وَوَعَدْنَا مُوسَى ثَلَاثِينَ لَيْلَةً

وَأَتَمَمْنَاهَا بِعَشْرِ

فَتَمَّ مِيقَاتُ رَبِّهِ أَرْبَعِينَ لَيْلَةً

وَقَالَ مُوسَى لِأَخِيهِ هَارُونَ

1098 If conjecture 2 in the 1st note is correct this idolatrous worship was but the fragment of a ruin from Egypt and Moses's reproach is biting "You who have been rescued from the bondage of living Egypt—do you hanker after the bondage of a dead cult debased even from that from which you have been rescued?"

*Mutabbbar*—broken in pieces smashed into fragments destroyed

1099 This is God's reminder to Israel through the mouth of Moses. There was a double trial (1) while the bondage lasted the people were to learn patience and constancy in the midst of affliction (2) when they were rescued they were to learn humility justice and righteous deeds of prosperity

1100 There is much mystic doctrine in this section and the parallel between Israel and Islam continues throughout. The forty nights communion of Moses with God on the Mount may be compared with the forty days fast of Jesus in the wilderness before he took up his ministry (Matt iv 2) and with the forty years of Muṣṭafā's preparation in life before he took up his Ministry. In each case the Apostles lived alone from their people, before they came into the full blaze of the events of their Ministry. The forty is divided into thirty and ten, prefiguring the thirty days of the Ramaḍān fast, and the ten days of the Zūl Ḥajj pilgrimage in Islam.

"Act for me amongst my people  
Do right, and follow not  
The way of those  
Who do mischief " 1101

- 143 When Moses came  
To the place appointed by Us,  
And his Lord addressed him,  
He said "Oh my Lord!  
Show (Thyself) to me,  
That I may look upon Thee " 1102  
God said "By no means  
Canst thou see Me (direct),  
But look upon the Mount,  
If it abide  
In its place, then  
Shalt thou see Me " 1103  
When his Lord manifested  
His glory on the Mount,  
He made it as dust,  
And Moses fell down  
In a swoon When he  
Recovered his senses he said  
"Praise be to Thee! To Thee  
I turn in repentance, and I  
Am the first to believe " 1104

اُخْلِقْنِي فِي قَوْمِي وَأَصْلِحْ  
وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ سَبِيلَ الْمُفْسِدِينَ ○

١٤٣- وَلَمَّا جَاءَ مُوسَى لِمِيقَاتِنَا  
وَكَلَّمَهُ رَبُّهُ قَالَ رَبِّ  
أَرِنِي أَنْظُرْ إِلَيْكَ قَالَ لَنْ تَرِنِي  
وَلَكِنْ انْظُرْ إِلَى الْجَبَلِ  
فَإِنْ اسْتَقَرَّ مَكَانَهُ فَسَوْفَ تَرِنِي  
فَلَمَّا تَجَلَّى رَبُّهُ لِلْجَبَلِ  
جَعَلَهُ دَكًّا  
وَخَرَّ مُوسَى صَعِقًا  
فَلَمَّا أَفَاقَ  
قَالَ سُبْحَنكَ ثُبْتُ إِلَيْكَ  
وَأَنَا أَوَّلُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ○

1101 When for any reason the man of God is absent from his people his duty of leadership (*khalāfat*) should be taken up by his brother—not necessarily a blood brother but one of his society or brotherhood. The deputy should discharge it in all humility remembering three things: (1) that he is only a deputy and bound to follow the directions of his Principal; (2) that right and justice are of the essence of power; and (3) that mischief gets its best chance to raise its head in the absence of the Principal and that the deputy should always guard against the traps laid for him in the Principal's absence.

1102 Even the best of us may be betrayed into overweening confidence or spiritual ambition not yet justified by the stage we have reached. Moses had already seen part of the glory of God in his Radiant White Hand that shone with the glory of Divine light (VI 108 n 1076). But he was still in the flesh and the mission to his people was to begin after the Covenant of Sinai. It was premature of him to ask to see God.

1103 But God—the Cherisher of all His creatures—treats even our foolish requests with mercy, compassion and understanding. Even the reflected glory of God is too great for the grosser substance of matter. The peak on which it shone became as powder before the ineffable glory, and Moses could only live by being taken out of his bodily senses. When he recovered from his swoon he saw the true position and the distance between our grosser bodily senses and the true splendour of God's glory. He at once turned in penitence to God and confessed his faith. Having been blinded by the excessive Glory he could not see with the physical eye. But he could get a glimpse of the reality through faith and he hastened to proclaim his faith.

1104 'First to believe'. Cf. the expression 'first of those who bow to God in Islam' in VI 14 and VI 163. 'First' means here not the first in time but most zealous in faith. It has the intensive and not the comparative meaning.

141 God said " Oh Moses !  
I have chosen thee  
Above (other) men,<sup>1105</sup>  
By the mission I (have  
Given thee) and the words  
I (have spoken to thee)  
Take then the (revelation)  
Which I give thee,  
And be of those  
Who give thanks " <sup>1106</sup>

145 And We ordained laws  
For him in the Tablets  
In all matters, both  
Commanding and explaining  
All things, (and said)  
" Take and hold these  
With firmness, and enjoin  
Thy people to hold fast  
By the best in the precepts <sup>1107</sup>  
Soon shall I show you <sup>1108</sup>  
The homes of the wicked, — <sup>1109</sup>  
(How they lie desolate) "

146 Those who behave arrogantly  
On the earth in defiance

١٤١- قَالَ يَمُوسَى  
إِنِّي اصْطَفَيْتُكَ عَلَى النَّاسِ  
بِرِسَالَتِي وَبِكَلَامِي  
فَخُذْ مَا آتَيْنَاكَ  
وَكَُنْ مِنَ الشَّاكِرِينَ ○

١٤٥- وَكَتَبْنَا لَهُ فِي الْأَلْوَابِ  
مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ مَوْعِظَةً  
وَتَفْصِيلًا لِّكُلِّ شَيْءٍ  
فَخُذْهَا بِقُوَّةٍ  
وَأْمُرْ قَوْمَكَ يَا خُذْ وَأَبَا حَسَنَهَا  
سَأُورِيكُمْ دَارَ الْفَاسِقِينَ ○

١٤٦- سَاخَرُوا عَنِ آلِهِ الَّذِينَ يَتَكَبَّرُونَ

1105 Above (other) men i.e. among his contemporaries. He had a high mission and he had the honour of speaking to God.

1106 God's revelation is for the benefit of His creatures who should receive it with reverence and gratitude. While Moses was having these great spiritual experiences on the Mount, his people below were ungrateful enough to forget God and make a golden calf for worship (VII. 147).

1107 The Tablets of the Law contained the essential spiritual Truth from which were derived the positive injunctions and prohibitions, explanations and interpretations which it was the function of the prophetic office to hold up for the people to follow. The precepts would contain, as the Shari'at does, matters absolutely prohibited, matters not prohibited but disapproved, matters about which there was no prohibition or injunction but in which conduct was to be regulated by circumstances, matters of positive and universal duty, matters recommended for those whose zeal was sufficient to enable them to work on higher than minimum standards, and matters which were sought by persons of the highest spiritual eminence. No soul is burdened beyond its capacity, but we are asked to seek the best and highest possible for us in conduct.

1108 Notice the transition from the "We" of authority and honour and impersonal dignity to the "I" of personal concern in specially guiding the righteous.

1109 There are two meanings, one literal and the other figurative. Literally the homes of the wicked, both individuals and nations, lie desolate as in the case of the ancient Egyptians, the 'Ad and the Thamud. Figuratively, the "home" shows the inner and more intimate condition of people. If you are dazzled by the outward prosperity of the ungodly, examine their inner anguish and fear and insecurity and you will thank God for His gracious guidance.

Of right—they will I  
 Turn away from My Signs <sup>110</sup>  
 Even if they see all the Signs,  
 They will not believe in them,  
 And if they see the way  
 Of right conduct, they will  
 Not adopt it as the Way,  
 But if they see the way  
 Of error, that is  
 The Way they will adopt  
 For they have rejected <sup>111</sup>  
 Our Signs, and failed  
 To take warning from them

- 147 Those who reject Our Signs  
 And the Meeting in the Hereafter,—  
 Vain are their deeds  
 Can they expect to be rewarded  
 Except as they have wrought?

#### SECTION 18

- 148 The people of Moses made,  
 In his absence, out of their  
 ornaments, <sup>112</sup>

فِي الْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ  
 وَإِنْ يَرَوْا كُلَّ آيَةٍ لَا يُؤْمِنُوا بِهَا  
 وَإِنْ يَرَوْا سَبِيلَ الرُّشْدِ  
 لَا يَتَّخِذُوهُ سَبِيلًا  
 وَإِنْ يَرَوْا سَبِيلَ الْغَيِّ يَتَّخِذُوهُ سَبِيلًا  
 ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا  
 وَكَانُوا عَنْهَا غَافِلِينَ ○

۱۴۷- وَالَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا وَلِقَاءِ الْآخِرَةِ  
 حَبِطَتْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ هَلْ يُجْزَوْنَ  
 إِلَّا مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ۝

۱۴۸- وَاتَّخَذَ قَوْمُ مُوسَى  
 مِنْ بَعْدِهِ مِنْ خُلَاقِهِمْ

1110 The argument may be simplified thus in paraphrase. The right is established on the earth as God created it. Nature recognises and obeys God's law as fixed for each portion of Creation. But man because of the gift of Will sometimes upsets this balance. The root cause is his arrogance, as it was in the case of Iblis. God's Signs are everywhere but if they are rejected with scorn and blasphemy God will withdraw His grace for sin hardens the heart and makes it impervious to the truth. Want of faith produces a kind of blindness to spiritual facts a kind of deafness to the warnings of a Day of Account when the best of us will need His Mercy for our Salvation which may be described spiritually as our Seeing God. If we had contumaciously rejected faith can we hope for anything but justice—the just punishment of our sins?

1111 *Rejected Our Signs* again a return to the Plural of impersonal Dignity and Authority from the singular of personal concern in granting grace and guidance to the righteous.

1112 The making of the golden calf and its worship by the Israelites during the absence of Moses on the Mount were referred to in ii 51 and some further details are given in xx 85-97. Notice how in each case only those points are referred to which are necessary to the argument in hand. A narrator, whose object is mere narration tells the story in all its details and is done with it. A consummate artist, whose object is to enforce lessons brings out each point in its proper place. Master of all details, he does not ramble but with supreme literary skill just adds the touch that is necessary in each place to complete the spiritual picture. His object is not a story but a lesson. Here notice the contrast between the intense spiritual communion of Moses on the Mount and the simultaneous corruption of his people in his absence. We can understand his righteous indignation and bitter grief (vii 150). The people had melted all their gold ornaments and made the image of a calf like the bull of Osiris in the city of Memphis in the wicked Egypt that they had turned their backs upon.



Seized his brother by (the hair  
Of) his head, and dragged him <sup>1117</sup>  
To him Aaron said  
"Son of my mother! The people  
Did indeed reckon me  
As naught, and went near  
To slaying me! Make not  
The enemies rejoice over  
My misfortune, nor count thou  
Me amongst the people  
Of sin " <sup>1118</sup>

- 151 Moses prayed "Oh my Lord!  
Forgive me and my brother <sup>1119</sup>  
Admit us to Thy mercy!  
For Thou art the Most Merciful  
Of those who show mercy!"

## SECTION 19

- 152 Those who took the calf  
For worship will indeed  
Be overwhelmed with wrath  
From their Lord, and with  
Shame in this life <sup>1120</sup>  
Thus do We recompense  
Those who invent (falsehoods)

- 153 But those who do wrong  
But repent thereafter and  
(Truly) believe,—verily  
Thy Lord is thereafter  
Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful

وَأَخَذَ بِرَأْسِ أَخِيهِ يَجُرُّهُ إِلَيْهِ  
قَالَ ابْنُ أُمِّ  
إِنَّ الْقَوْمَ اسْتَضَعُّوْنِي  
وَكَاذِبُوا يَفْتُلُونَنِي  
فَلَا تُشْمِتْ بِيَ الْأَعْدَاءَ  
وَلَا تَجْعَلْنِي مَعَ الْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ ○  
۱۵۱- قَالَ رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي وَلِإِخْوَتِي  
وَأَدْخِلْنَا فِي رَحْمَتِكَ  
وَأَنْتَ أَرْحَمُ الرَّحِيمِينَ ۞

۱۵۲- إِنَّ الَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا الصُّوْلَةَ  
سَيَنَا لَهُمْ غَضَبٌ مِّنْ رَبِّهِمْ  
وَذِلَّةٌ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا  
وَكَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُفْتَرِينَ ○  
۱۵۳- وَالَّذِينَ عَمِلُوا السَّيِّئَاتِ  
ثُمَّ تَابُوا مِن بَعْدِهَا وَأَمْنُوا إِنَّ رَبَّكَ  
مِنْ بَعْدِهَا غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ○

1117 Moses was but human. Remembering the charge he had given to Aaron (v 142) he had a just grievance at the turn events had taken. But he did not wreak his vengeance on the Tablets of God's law by breaking them. He laid hands on his brother, and his brother at once explained

1118 Aaron's speech is full of tenderness and regret. He addresses Moses as "son of my mother,"—an affectionate term. He explains how the turbulent people nearly killed him for resisting them. And he states in the clearest terms that the idolatry neither originated with him nor had his consent. In xx 85 we are told that a fellow described as the Sāmiri had led them astray. We shall discuss this when we come to that passage.

1119 As Moses was convinced that his brother was guiltless, his wrath was turned to gentleness. He prayed for forgiveness—for himself and his brother—for himself because of his wrath and for his brother because he had been unable to suppress idolatry among his people. And like a true leader that he is, he identifies himself with his lieutenant for all that has happened. Even more, he identifies himself with his whole people in his prayer in verse 155 below. Herein, again, is a type of what the Holy Prophet Muhammad did for his people.

1120 The consequences were twofold. (1) spiritual, in that God's grace is withdrawn, and (2) even in the present life of this world, in that godly men also shun the sinner's company, and he is isolated.

154. When the anger of Moses  
Was appeased, he took up  
The Tablets' in the writing  
Thereon was Guidance and Mercy  
For such as fear their Lord

155 And Moses chose seventy<sup>1121</sup>  
Of his people for Our place  
Of meeting when they  
Were seized with violent

quaking,<sup>1122</sup>

He prayed "Oh my Lord!  
If it had been Thy Will  
Thou couldst have destroyed,  
Long before, both them  
And me wouldst Thou  
Destroy us for the deeds  
Of the foolish ones among us?  
This is no more than<sup>1123</sup>  
Thy trial by it Thou causest  
Whom Thou wilt to stray,<sup>1124</sup>  
And Thou ledest whom  
Thou wilt into the right path  
Thou art our Protector  
So forgive us and give us  
Thy mercy, for Thou art  
The best of those who forgive

156 "And ordain for us  
That which is good,  
In this life  
And in the Hereafter  
For we have turned unto Thee"  
He said "With My Punishment

١٥٤- وَلَمَّا سَكَتَ عَنْ مُوسَى الْغَضَبُ  
أَخَذَ الْوَلَدَ فِي سَخْتِهَا هَدًى وَ  
رَحْمَةً لِلَّذِينَ هُمْ لِأَبْوَابِهِمْ يَرْجُونَ ○

١٥٥- وَاخْتَارَ مُوسَى قَوْمَهُ سَبْعِينَ رَجُلًا  
لِمِيقَاتِنَا فَلَمَّا أَخَذَتْهُمُ الرَّجْفَةُ  
قَالَ رَبِّ

لَوْ شِئْتَ أَهْلَكْتَهُم مِّن قَبْلُ وَإِنِّي  
أَلْقَيْتُكَ بِمَا فَعَلَ الشُّفْعَاءُ مِنِّي

إِن هِيَ إِلَّا فِتْنَتُكَ  
تُضِلُّ بِهَا مَن تَشَاءُ  
وَتَهْدِي مَن تَشَاءُ

أَنْتَ وَلِيُّنَا  
فَاغْفِرْ لَنَا وَارْحَمْنَا  
وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الْغَافِرِينَ ○

١٥٦- وَالْكَتَبَ لَنَا فِي هَذِهِ الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً  
وَّفِي الْآخِرَةِ  
إِنَّا هُدْنَا إِلَيْكَ قَالَ عَذَابِي

1121 Seventy of the elders were taken up to the Mount but left at some distance from the place where God spoke to Moses. They were to be silent witnesses but their faith was not yet complete, and they dared to say to Moses "We shall never believe in thee until we see God in public." (ii 55) They were dazed with thunder and lightning and might have been destroyed but for God's mercy on the intercession of Moses.

1122 *Rajfal* violent quaking earthquake. I take it to refer to the same event as is described by the word *Sā'iqat* in ii 55 the thunder and lightning that shook the mountain side.

1123 Moses was guiltless but he identifies himself with his whole people and intercedes with God on their behalf. He recognises that it was a trial, in which some of his people failed to stand the test. Such failure was worthy of punishment. But he pleads for mercy for such as erred from weakness and not from contumacy, and were truly repentant, although all who erred were in their several degrees worthy of punishment.



I visit whom I will ,  
But My Mercy extendeth <sup>1126</sup>  
To all things That (Mercy)  
I shall ordain for those  
Who do right, practise  
Regular charity, and believe  
In Our Signs ,—<sup>1126</sup>

- 157 " Those who follow the Apostle,  
The unlettered Prophet,  
Whom they find mentioned  
In their own (Scriptures),—<sup>1127</sup>  
In the Law and the Gospel,—  
For he commands them  
What is just and forbids them  
What is evil, he allows  
Them as lawful what is good  
(And pure) and prohibits them  
From what is bad (and impure),  
He releases them  
From their heavy burdens  
And from the yokes <sup>1128</sup>  
That are upon them  
So it is those who believe  
In him, honour him,  
Help him, and follow the Light  
Which is sent down with him,—<sup>1129</sup>

أَصِيبُ بِهِ مَنْ أَشَاءَ وَرَحْمَتِي وَسِعَتْ  
كُلَّ شَيْءٍ فَسَأَلْتُهُمُ الَّذِينَ يَتَّقُونَ  
وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ  
وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ بِآيَاتِنَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ٥  
١٥٤-الَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ الرَّسُولَ  
النَّبِيَّ الَّذِي يَخْلُفُ فِيهِ مَكْتُوبًا  
عِنْدَهُمْ فِي التَّوْرَةِ وَالْإِنْجِيلِ  
يَأْمُرُهُمْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَاهُمْ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ  
وَيُحِلُّ لَهُمُ الطَّيِّبَاتِ  
وَيُحَرِّمُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْخَبَائِثَ وَيَضَعُ عَنْهُمْ  
إِصْرَهُمْ وَالْأَغْلَالَ الَّتِي كَانَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ  
فَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِهِ وَعَزَّرُوهُ وَنَصَرُوهُ  
وَاتَّبَعُوا النُّورَ الَّذِي أُنْزِلَ مَعَهُ ٧

1125 God's mercy is in and for all things. All nature subserves a common purpose which is for the good of all. His creatures. Our faculties and our understandings are all instances of His grace and mercy. Each unit or factor among his creatures benefits from the others and receives them as God's mercy to itself and in its turn each contributes to the benefit of the others and is thus an instance of God's mercy to them. His mercy is universal and all pervasive while His justice and punishment are reserved for those who swerve from His plan and (to use a mediæval juridical formula) go out of His Peace.

1126 The personal grace and mercy—and their opposite—are referred to the singular pronoun 'I' while the impersonal Law by which God's Signs operate in His universe is referred to the plural pronoun of authority and dignity 'We'.

1127 In this verse is a prefiguring to Moses, of the Arabian Apostle the last and greatest of the apostles of God. Prophecies about him will be found in the Taurat and the Injil. In the reflex of the Taurat as now accepted by the Jews Moses says 'The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee of thy brethren like unto me' (Deut. xviii. 15) the only Prophet who brought a Shar'iat like that of Moses was Muḥammad Muṣṭafā, and he came of the house of Ismā'il the brother of Isaac the father of Israel. In the reflex of the Gospel as now accepted by the Christians Christ promised another Comforter (John xiv. 16) the Greek word *Paraclete* which the Christians interpret as referring to the Holy Spirit is by our Doctors taken to be *Periclyte*, which would be the Greek form of Aḥmad. See Q. lxi. 6.

1128 *Aglāl* plural of *gullun* a yoke, an iron collar. In the formalism and exclusiveness of the Jews there were many restrictions which were removed by Islam a religion of freedom in the faith of God, of universality in the variety of races languages manners and customs.

1129 *Light which is sent down with him* the words are 'with him', not 'to him' emphasizing the fact that the Light which he brought illumines every one who has the privilege of joining his great and universal Fellowship.

It is they who will prosper " 1180

﴿ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ۝

C 87 — With the advent of the Holy Apostle,  
(vii 158 171) The light and guidance which he brought  
For all mankind from God  
Superseded the earlier Law for the Jews  
The good and the upright among them  
Followed the new Light, but  
The rest were scattered through the earth

## SECTION 20

58 Say "Oh men! I am sent<sup>1131</sup>  
Unto you all, as the Apostle  
Of God, to Whom belongeth  
The dominion of the heavens  
And the earth there is no god  
But He it is He that giveth  
Both life and death So believe  
In God and His Apostle,  
The unlettered Prophet,<sup>1132</sup>  
Who believeth in God  
And His Words follow him  
That (so) ye may be guided

١٥٨- قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ  
إِلَيْكُمْ جَمِيعًا الَّذِي لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَ  
الْأَرْضِ لَا إِلٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ  
فَآمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ النَّبِيِّ الْأُمِّيِّ  
الَّذِي يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَكَلِمَاتِهِ  
وَاتَّبِعُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ ۝

59 Of the people of Moses  
There is a section  
Who guide and do justice  
In the light of truth

١٥٩- وَمِنْ قَوْمِ مُوسَى  
أُمَّةٌ يَهْتَدُونَ بِالْحَقِّ وَبِهِ يَعْبُدُونَ ۝

1130 Falah = prosperity in its general sense as well as in its spiritual sense In the general sense it means that right conduct is the only door to happiness and well being In the spiritual sense it means that Faith and its fruits (right conduct) are the only gates to salvation

1131 Our attention having been directed to various apostles who were sent with missions to their several peoples and in each of whose careers there is some pre figurement of the life of the last and greatest of them we are now asked to listen to the proclamation of Muhammad's universal mission We contemplate no longer after this partial truths It is not now a question of saving Israel from the bondage of Egypt nor teaching Midian the ethics of business nor reclaiming the people of Lot from sexual sin or Thamud from the sin of oppression in power or Ad from arrogance and ancestor worship Now are set forth plainly the issues of Life and Death the Message of the One Universal God to all mankind

1132 'Unlettered' is applied to the Prophet here and in verse 157 above has three special significations (1) He was not versed in human learning, yet he was full of the highest wisdom and had a most wonderful knowledge of the previous Scriptures This was a proof of his inspiration It was a miracle of the highest kind a 'Sign', which every one could test then and every one can test now (2) All organised human knowledge tends to be crystallised to acquire a partial bias or flavour of some school of thought The highest Teacher had to be free from any such taint just as a clean slate is necessary if a perfectly clear and bold message has to be written on it (3) In iii 20 and lxi 2 the epithet is applied to the Pagan Arabs, because, before the advent of Islam they were unlearned That the last and greatest of the Prophets should arise among them and they and their language be made the vehicle of the new, full, and universal light has also a meaning which is explained in C 12 15

160 We divided them into twelve  
Tribes <sup>1183</sup>

Or nations We directed  
Moses by inspiration,  
When his (thirsty) people asked  
Him for water "Strike the rock  
With thy staff" out of it  
There gushed forth twelve

springs  
Each man knew his own place  
For water We gave them  
The shade of clouds, and sent  
Down to them manna and quails,  
Saying "Eat of the good things  
We have provided for you"  
(But they rebelled), to Us  
They did no harm, but  
They harmed their own souls <sup>1184</sup>

161 And remember it was  
Said to them  
"Dwell in this town  
And eat <sup>1185</sup> therein as ye wish,  
But say the word of humility  
And enter the gate  
In a posture of humility  
We shall forgive you  
Your faults, We shall increase  
The portion of those who do  
good"

162 But the transgressors among them  
Changed the word from that  
Which had been given them,  
So we sent on them  
A plague from heaven  
For that they repeatedly  
transgressed <sup>1186</sup>

#### SECTION 21

163 Ask them concerning the town  
Standing close by the sea  
Behold! they transgressed

١٦٠- وَقَطَعْنَاهُمْ اثْنَتَى عَشْرَةَ أَسْبَاطًا  
أُمَمًا وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَىٰ مُوسَىٰ إِذِ اسْتَسْقَاهُ  
قَوْمُهُ أَنْ أَضْرِبَ بِعَصَاكَ الْجَبْرَ  
فَالْبَجَسَتْ مِنْهُ اثْنَتَا عَشْرَةَ عَيْنًا  
قَدْ عَلِمَ كُلُّ أُنَاسٍ مَشْرَبَهُمْ  
وَوَضَعْنَا عَلَىٰ غَمَامٍ  
وَأَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَنَّاءَ وَالسَّلَوى  
كُلُوا مِنْ طَيِّبَاتِ مَا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ وَمَا ظَلَمُونَا  
وَلَكِنْ كَانُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ ○

١٦١- وَإِذْ قِيلَ لَهُمْ اسْكُنُوا هَذِهِ الْقَرْيَةَ  
وَكُلُوا مِنْهَا حَيْثُ شِئْتُمْ  
وَقُولُوا حِطَّةٌ  
وَادْخُلُوا الْبَابَ سُجَّدًا  
نَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ خَطِيئَتَكُمْ  
سَنَزِيدُ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ○  
١٦٢- قَبَّلَ الَّذِينَ الظَّالِمِينَ مِنْهُمْ  
قَوْلًا غَيْرَ الَّذِي  
قِيلَ لَهُمْ فَأَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ رِجْزًا مِنْ  
السَّمَاءِ بِمَا كَانُوا يَظْلِمُونَ ○

١٦٣- وَسَأَلْنَاهُمْ عَنِ الْقَرْيَةِ الَّتِي كَانَتْ  
حَاضِرَةَ الْبَحْرِ إِذْ يَعْدُونَ

ع

ق

1133 We now come to some incidents in Jewish history which have been referred to in n 57 60. Here they have special reference to their bearing on the times when early Islam was preached. The Twelve Tribes and the parable drawn from them have been explained in n 73 to u 60

1134 Cf u 57 and n

1135 As in vii. 19, we may construe "eat" here to mean not only eating literally, but enjoying the good things of life

1136 Cf u. 58-59, and n. 72. The story is here told by way of parable for the times of Islam. Hence we have a few verbal changes e.g. 'dwell in this town' instead of "enter this town," etc

In the matter of the Sabbath <sup>1137</sup>  
 For on the day of their Sabbath  
 Their fish did come to them,  
 Openly holding up their heads,  
 But on the day they had  
 No Sabbath, they came not  
 Thus did We make a trial  
 Of them, for they were  
 Given to transgression

فِي السَّبْتِ إِذْ تَأْتِيهِمْ حَيْثَا تَأْتِيهِمْ نَوْمُهُمْ  
 سَبِيحَتِهِمْ شَرَعًا  
 وَيَوْمَ لَا يَسْبِتُونَ لَا تَأْتِيهِمْ  
 كَذَلِكَ نَبْلُوهُمْ  
 بِمَا كَانُوا يَفْسُقُونَ ○

- 164 When some of them said  
 "Why do ye preach  
 To a people whom God  
 Will destroy or visit  
 With a terrible  
 punishment ? " — <sup>1138</sup>  
 Said the preachers "To discharge  
 Our duty to your Lord,  
 And perchance they may fear  
 Him "

۱۶۴- وَإِذْ قَالَتْ أُمَّةٌ مِنْهُمْ  
 لِمَ تَعِظُونَ قَوْمًا اللَّهُ مُهْلِكُهُمْ  
 أَوْ مُعَذِّبُهُمْ عَذَابًا شَدِيدًا  
 قَالُوا مَعذِرَةٌ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُمْ  
 وَلَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ ○

- 165 When they disregarded the  
 warnings  
 That had been given them,  
 We rescued those who forbade  
 Evil, but We visited  
 The wrong-doers with a  
 Grievous punishment, because  
 They were given to transgression

۱۶۵- فَلَمَّا نَسُوا مَا ذُكِّرُوا بِهِ  
 أَنجَيْنَا الَّذِينَ يَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ السُّوءِ  
 وَأَخَذْنَا الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا  
 بِعَذَابٍ بَئِيسٍ بِمَا كَانُوا يَفْسُقُونَ ○

- 166 When in their insolence  
 They transgressed (all) prohibitions,  
 We said to them  
 "Be ye apes,  
 Despised and rejected " <sup>1139</sup>

۱۶۶- فَلَمَّا عَتَوْا عَنْ مَا نُهُوا عَنْهُ  
 قُلْنَا لَهُمْ  
 كُونُوا قِرَدَةً خَاسِئِينَ ○

1137 Cf u 65 and n Fishing like every other activity was prohibited to Israel on the Sabbath day As this practice was usually observed the fish used to come up with a sense of security to their water channels or pools openly on the Sabbath day, but not on other days when fishing was open This was a great temptation to the law-breakers which they could not resist Some of their men of piety protested but it had no effect When their transgressions which, we may suppose extended to other commandments, passed beyond bounds, the punishment came They were despised among their own people, and became like apes, without law and without order or decency

1138 There are always people who wonder, no doubt sincerely, what good it is to preach to the wicked The answer is given to them here (1) every man who sees evil must speak out against it, it is his duty and responsibility to God, (2) there is always a chance that the warning may have effect and save a precious soul This passage has a special meaning for the times when our Holy Prophet was preaching in Mecca, apparently without results But it applies to all times, 1

167. Behold! thy Lord did  
declare 1140

That He would send  
Against them, to the Day  
Of Judgment, those who would  
Afflict them with grievous  
Penalty Thy Lord is quick  
In retribution, but He is also  
Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful

168 We broke them up  
Into sections on this earth 1141  
There are among them some  
That are the righteous, and some  
That are the opposite  
We have tried them  
With both prosperity and  
adversity

In order that they  
Might turn (to Us).

169 After them succeeded  
An (evil) generation they  
Inherited the Book, but  
They chose (for themselves) 1142  
The vanities of this world,  
Saying (for excuse)  
“(Everything)  
Will be forgiven us”  
(Even so), if similar vanities  
Came their way, they would  
(Again) seize them  
Was not the Covenant 1143  
Of the Book taken from them,  
That they would not  
Ascribe to God anything

١٦٧- وَإِذْ تَأَذَّنَ رَبُّكَ لِيَبْعَثَنَّ عَلَيْهِمْ  
إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَمَةِ  
مَنْ يَكُونُ لَهُمْ سَوْءَ الْعَذَابِ  
إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَسَرِيعُ الْعِقَابِ  
وَأِنَّهُ لَغَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ○

١٦٨- وَقَطَعْنَاهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ أُمَمًا  
مِنْهُمْ الظَّالِمُونَ  
وَمِنْهُمْ ذُؤُنْ ذَلِكَ  
وَبَلَّوْنَاهُمْ بِالْحَسَنَاتِ  
وَالسَّيِّئَاتِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ ○

١٦٩- فَخَلَفَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ خَلْفٌ  
وَرِثُوا الْكِتَابَ  
يَأْخُذُونَ عَرَضَ هَذَا الْأَكْثَرِ  
وَيَقُولُونَ سَيُغْفَرُ لَنَا  
وَأِنْ يَأْتِهِمْ عَرَضٌ مِثْلُ  
يَأْخُذُوهُ  
أَلَمْ يُؤْخَذْ عَلَيْهِمْ مِيثَاقُ الْكِتَابِ  
أَنْ لَا يَقُولُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ

1140 See Deut xi 28 "A curse if ye will not obey the commandments of the Lord your God, but turn aside out of the way which I command you this day" also Deut xxviii 49, The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from afar, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth, a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand, and many other passages

1141 The dispersal of the Jews is a great fact in the world's history Nor has their persecution ended yet, nor is it likely to end as far as we can foresee

1142 Merely inheriting a Book, or doing lip service to it, does not make a nation righteous If they succumb to the temptations of the world, their hypocrisy becomes all the more glaring "High Silence" is one of these temptations Cf also i 80 "the Fire shall not touch us except for a few numbered days" and ii 88, about their blasphemous self sufficiency.

1143, Cf. Exod xix. 5-8, xxiv 3, xxxiv 27, and many other passages.

But the truth? And they  
Study what is in the Book  
But best for the righteous  
Is the Home in the Hereafter  
Will ye not understand?

70 As to those who hold fast  
By the Book and establish  
Regular Prayer,—never  
Shall we suffer the reward  
Of the righteous to perish

71 When We shook the Mount  
Over them, as if it had been  
A canopy, and they thought  
It was going to fall on them  
(We said) " Hold firmly <sup>1144</sup>  
To what We have given you,  
And bring (ever) to remembrance  
What is therein, <sup>1145</sup>  
Perchance ye may fear God "

إِلَّا الْحَقُّ وَدَلَّلُوا مَا فِيهِ  
وَالَّذِينَ الْأَخْرَجُوا خَيْرٌ لِلَّذِينَ يَسْتَقُونَ  
أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ  
۝ وَالَّذِينَ يُسَبِّحُونَ بِالْكَتَابِ  
وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ  
إِنَّا لَا نُضِيعُ أَجْرَ الْمُصْلِحِينَ  
۝ ۱۴۰ وَإِذْ نُنْفِثُ الْجِبَلَ فَوْقَهُمْ  
كَأَنَّهُ ظِلَّةٌ وَظَنُّوا أَنَّهُ وَاقِعٌ بِهِمْ  
خُذُوا مَا آتَيْنَاكُمْ بِقُوَّةٍ  
وَاذْكُرُوا مَا فِيهِ  
لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ۝

C 88 —Mankind have the nature of good  
(vii 172-206) Created within them yet doth God  
By His Signs keep up a constant  
Reminder to men of His holy Names  
Those who err scarce realise  
How gradually they fall into sin  
Their respite has a term, the doom  
Must come, and it may be on a sudden  
So humbly draw nigh to the Lord,  
Declare His glory, and rejoice in His service

## SECTION 22

72 ~~W~~hen thy Lord drew  
forth <sup>1 46</sup>  
From the Children of Adam—

۱۴۲ وَإِذْ أَخَذَ رَبُّكَ مِنْ بَنِي آدَمَ

1144 Cf ii 63 and n

1145 *Therein*—in the Book or Revelation, in what We have given you

1146 This passage has led to differences of opinion in interpretation Does it mean that each individual in the posterity of Adam had a separate existence from the time of Adam, and that a Covenant was taken from all of them, which is binding accordingly on each individual? That question really does not arise The words in the text refer to the descendants of the Children of Adam, i.e., to all humanity born or unborn without any limit of time Adam's seed carries on the existence of Adam, and succeeds to his spiritual heritage Humanity as such has a corporate aspect Humanity has been given by God certain powers and faculties, whose possession creates on our side special spiritual obligations, which we must faithfully discharge, see v 1, and n. 682 These obligations may from a legal point of view be considered as arising from implied Covenants In the preceding verse (vii 171) a reference was made to the implied Covenant of the Jewish nation. Now we consider the implied Covenant of the whole of humanity, for the Holy Apostle's mission was world-wide

From their loins—  
 Their descendants, and made <sup>them</sup>  
 Testify concerning themselves,  
 (saying)  
 "Am I not your Lord  
 (Who cherishes and sustains  
 you)?"—  
 They said "Yea!  
 We do testify!"<sup>1147</sup> (This), lest  
 Ye should say on the Day  
 Of Judgment "Of this we  
 Were never (duly) warned"

173 Or lest ye should say  
 "Our fathers before us  
 May have taken false gods,  
 But we are (their) descendants  
 After them wilt thou then  
 Destroy us because of the deeds  
 Of men who were futile?"<sup>1148</sup>

174 Thus do We explain  
 The Signs in detail,  
 And perchance they may turn  
 (Unto Us)

175 **R**elate to them the story<sup>1149</sup>  
 Of the man to whom  
 We sent Our Signs,  
 But he passed them by

مِنْ ظُهُورِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّتَهُمْ  
 وَاشْهَدَهُمْ عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِهِمْ  
 أَلسْتُ بِرَبِّكُمْ  
 قَالُوا بَلَىٰ ۚ  
 شَهِدْنَا ۚ  
 أَنْ تَعُولُوا يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ  
 إِنَّا كُنَّا عَنْ هَذَا غَافِلِينَ ۝  
 ١٤٣- أَوْ تَقُولُوا  
 إِنَّمَا أَشْرَكَ آبَاؤُنَا مِنْ قَبْلُ  
 وَكُنَّا ذُرِّيَّةً مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ  
 أَفَتُهْلِكُنَا بِمَا فَعَلَ الْمُبْطِلُونَ ۝  
 ١٤٤- وَكَذَلِكَ نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ  
 وَلَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ ۝

١٤٥- وَاتْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ نَسْأَ الْاَلِىَّ اَتَيْنَهُ  
 اٰيٰتِنَا فَاَسْلَكَ مِنْهَا

1147 The Covenant is completed in this way. We acknowledge that God is our Creator Cherisher and Sustainer; therefore we acknowledge our duty to Him when we so testify concerning ourselves, the obligation is as it were assumed by us for it follows from our very nature when it is pure and uncorrupted.

1148 The latent faculties in man are enough to teach him the distinction between good and evil to warn him of the dangers that beset his life. But to awaken and stimulate them a personal appeal is made to each individual through the still small voice within him. This in its uncorrupted state acknowledges the truth and metaphorically swears its Covenant with God. There is, therefore no excuse for any individual to say either (1) that he was not duly warned or (2) that he should not be punished for the sins of his fathers because his punishment (if any) comes from his personal responsibility and is for his own rejection of faith and the higher spiritual influences.

1149 Commentators differ whether this story or parable refers to a particular individual and if so to whom. The story of Balaam the seer who was called out by Israel's enemies to curse Israel, but who blessed Israel instead (Num. xxii. xxiii. xxiv) is quite different. It is better to take the parable in a general sense. There are men, of talents and position to whom great opportunities, of spiritual insight come, but they perversely pass them by. Satan sees his opportunity and catches them up. Instead of rising higher in the spiritual world, their selfish and worldly desires and ambitions pull them down, and they are lost.

So Satan followed him up,  
And he went astray

- 176 If it had been Our Will,  
We should have elevated him  
With Our Signs, but he  
Inclined to the earth,  
And followed his own vain <sup>des res</sup> 1150

His similitude is that  
Of a dog if you attack  
Him, he lolls out his tongue,  
Or if you leave him alone,  
He (still) lolls out his tongue 1151  
That is the similitude  
Of those who reject Our Signs,  
So relate the story,  
Perchance they may reflect

- 177 Evil as an example are  
People who reject Our Signs  
And wrong their own souls

- 178 Whom God doth guide,—  
He is on the right path  
Whom He rejects from His  
guidance,—  
Such are the persons who  
perish 1152

- 179 Many are the Jinns and men  
We have made for Hell  
They have hearts wherewith they  
Understand not, eyes  
wherewith 1153

فَاتَّبَعَهُ الشَّيْطَانُ فَكَانَ مِنَ الْغَاوِينَ ○

١٤٦- وَلَوْ شِئْنَا لَرَفَعْنَاهُ بِهَا  
وَلَكِنَّهُ أَخْلَدَ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ  
وَاتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ

فَسَمَلَهُ كَسَلُ الْكَلْبِ  
إِنْ تَحَمَّلَ عَلَيْهِ يَلْهَثُ  
أَوْ تَرَكَهُ يَلْهَثُ ذَلِكَ مَثَلُ الْقَوْمِ  
الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا

فَأَنصَحْ الْقَصَصَ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ○

١٤٤- سَاءَ مَثَلًا الْقَوْمَ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا  
بِآيَاتِنَا وَأَنفُسُهُمْ كَانُوا يَظْلِمُونَ ○

١٤٨- مَنْ يَهْدِ اللَّهُ فَهُوَ الْمُهْتَدِى  
وَمَنْ يَضِلْ

فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ ○

١٤٩- وَلَقَدْ ذَرَأْنَا لِجَهَنَّمَ كَثِيرًا  
مِّنَ الْجِنِّ وَالْإِنسِ لَهُمْ قُلُوبٌ لَا  
يَفْقَهُونَ بِهَا- وَلَهُمْ أَعْيُنٌ

1150 Notice the contrast between the exalted spiritual honours which they would have received from God if they had followed His Will and the earthly desires which eventually bring them low to the position of beasts and worse

1151 The dog especially in the hot weather lolls out his tongue whether he is attacked and pursued and is tired or he is left alone It is part of his nature to slobber So with the man who rejects God Whether he is warned or left alone he continues to throw out his dirty saliva The injury he will do will be to his own soul But there may be infection in his evil example So we must protect others And we must never give up hope of his own amendment So we must continue to warn him and make him think

1152 Those who reject God will be deprived of God's grace and guidance His Mercy is always open for sincere repentance But with each step downwards they go lower and lower, until they perish

1153 Cf. II. 18 Though they have apparently all the faculties of reason and perception, they have so deadened them that those faculties do not work and they go headlong into Hell They are, as it were, made for Hell



They see not, and ears wherewith  
They hear not They are  
Like cattle,—nay more  
Misguided for they  
Are heedless (of warning)

- 180 The most beautiful names <sup>1154</sup>  
Belong to God  
So call on Him by them,  
But shun such men as  
Use profanity in His names  
What they do will soon  
Be requited

- 181 Of those We have created  
Are people who direct  
(Others) with Truth,  
And dispense justice therewith

### SECTION 23

- 182 Those who reject Our Signs,  
We shall gradually visit  
With punishment, in ways  
They perceive not ,

- 183 Respite will I grant  
Unto them for My scheme  
Is strong (and unfailing)

- 184 Do they not reflect?  
Their Companion is not seized <sup>1 55</sup>

لَا يَبْصُرُونَ بِهَا وَلَهُمْ أَذَانٌ لَا يَسْمَعُونَ  
بِهَا أُولَئِكَ كَالْأَنْعَامِ  
بَلْ هُمْ أَضَلُّ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْغَافِلُونَ ○

١٨٠- وَلِلَّهِ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَى  
فَادْعُوهُ بِهَا وَذُرُوا الَّذِينَ  
يُلْحِدُونَ فِي أَسْمَائِهِ  
سَيُجْزَوْنَ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ○

١٨١- وَمَنْ خَلَقْنَا أُمَّةً يَهْدُونَ  
بِالْحَقِّ وَبِهِ يَعْدِلُونَ ○

١٨٢- وَالَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا  
سَنَسْتَدْرِجُهُمْ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ○

١٨٣- وَأُمْلِي لَهُمْ  
إِن كَيْدِي مَتِينٌ ○

١٨٤- أَوَلَمْ يَتَفَكَّرُوا مَا بِصَاحِبِهِمْ

1154 As we contemplate God's nature, we can use the most beautiful names we can think of, to express His attributes. There are hundreds of such attributes. In the opening Sūra we have these indicated in a few comprehensive words such as *Rahmān* (most Gracious) *Raḥīm* (most Merciful) *Rabb ul ālamīn* (Cherisher and Sustainer of the worlds). Our bringing such names to remembrance is part of our Prayer and Praise. But we must not associate with people who use God's names profanely, or so as to suggest anything derogatory to His dignity or His unity. Cf xvii 110

1155 *Their companion* i.e., the Holy Apostle, who lived with and amongst them. He was accused of madness because he behaved differently from them. He had no selfish ambitions, he was always true, in thought word and deed, he was kind and considerate to the weak, and was not dazzled by worldly power or wealth or position, he was undeterred by fear of the strong, the mockery of the cynics, the bitterness of the evil, or the indifference of the heedless. That is why he stood out boldly against wrong—he did not mince his words, and his warnings were not mealy mouthed.

With madness . he is but  
A perspicuous warner <sup>1156</sup>

- 185 Do they see nothing  
In the government of the heavens  
And the earth and all  
That God hath created ? <sup>1157</sup>  
(Do they not see) that  
It may well be that  
Their term is nigh  
Drawing to an end ?  
In what Message after this  
Will they then believe ?

- 186 To such as God rejects  
From His guidance, there can be  
No guide He will  
Leave them in their trespasses,  
Wandering in distraction <sup>1158</sup>

- 187 They ask thee about  
The (final) Hour—when  
Will be its appointed time ?  
Say "The knowledge thereof  
Is with my Lord (alone)  
None but He can reveal  
As to when it will occur <sup>1159</sup>  
Heavy were its burden through  
The heavens and the earth  
Only, all of a sudden  
Will it come to you "  
They ask thee as if thou

عَرِنَ جَهْلُهُ إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا نَذِيرٌ مُبِينٌ ۝

هَلْ أَوَّلَ لَمْ يَنْظُرُوا فِي مَلَكُوتِ السَّمٰوٰتِ  
وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ مِنْ شَيْءٍ  
وَإِنْ عَلَى أَنْ يَكُونَ قَدْ أَقْتَرَبَ أَجَلُهُمْ  
فَبِأَيِّ حَدِيثٍ  
بَعْدَهُ يُؤْمِنُونَ ۝

۱۸۶- مَنْ يُضِلِلِ اللَّهُ  
فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهُ  
وَيَذَرُهُمْ فِي طُغْيَانِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ ۝

۱۸۷- يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ السَّاعَةِ  
أَيَّانَ مُرْسِمُهَا قُلْ إِنَّمَا عِلْمُهَا  
عِنْدَ رَبِّي لَا يُجَلِّيهَا لِوَقْتِهَا  
إِلَّا هُوَ ثَقُلَتْ فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ  
لَا تَأْتِيكُمْ إِلَّا بَغْتَةً  
يَسْأَلُونَكَ كَأَنَّكَ

فَيُفَصِّلُهَا

1156 *Mubīn* perspicuous The reason why I have not used a simpler word such as 'plain' or 'clear' is explained in n. 716 to v. 17. *Muṣṭafa*'s sermons were not polite reminders with an eye to the flattery of weaknesses in high places or national vanities or crowd passions. They brought out every foible into the glare of light, by a fiery eloquence fed by inspiration from God.

1157 An appeal to God's most wonderful universe should at once convince a thinking mind of man's nothingness and God's power, glory and goodness. Man's term here is fleeting. If he is not warned by the great Signs and the Messages which call his attention to them, is he capable of any faith at all ?

1158 Cf. n. 15. If God's light is removed, the best of them can only wander hither and thither, like blind men, in distraction.

1159 The fact of its coming is a certainty, the exact time appointed for it is not revealed by God. If it were, it would be so momentous as to disturb our thoughts and life. It would be a heavy burden to us. Our duty is to be prepared for it at all times. It will come when we least expect it. In the present Gospels Jesus says the same thing: he does not know the Hour, but it will come suddenly. "But of that day and that Hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father. Take ye heed, watch and pray for ye know not when the time is" (Mark xiii 32-33).

Wert eager in search thereof <sup>1160</sup>  
 Say "The knowledge thereof  
 Is with God (alone),  
 But most men know not "

حَفِيٌّ عَنْهَا قُلْ إِنَّمَا عِلْمُهَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ  
 وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ٥

188 Say "I have no power  
 Over any good or harm  
 To myself except as God  
 Willeth If I had knowledge  
 Of the unseen, I should have  
 Multiplied all good, and no evil  
 Should have touched me  
 I am but a warner,  
 And a bringer of glad tidings  
 To those who have faith " <sup>1161</sup>

١٨٨- قُلْ لَا أَمْلِكُ لِنَفْسِي نَفْعًا وَلَا  
 ضَرًّا إِلَّا مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ وَلَوْ كُنْتُ أَعْلَمُ الْغَيْبِ  
 لَأَسْتَكْثِرْتُ مِنَ الْخَيْرِ  
 وَمَا مَسْنِيَ الشُّوْءُ إِنَّا إِلَّا نَذِيرٌ  
 وَبَشِيرٌ لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ٥

#### SECTION 24

189 It is He Who created  
 You from a single person,  
 And made his mate  
 Of like nature, <sup>1162</sup> in order  
 That he might dwell with her  
 (In love) When they are  
 United, she bears a light  
 Burden and carries it about  
 (Unnoticed) When she grows  
 Heavy, they both pray <sup>1163</sup>  
 To God their Lord, (saying)  
 "If Thou givest us  
 A goodly child, <sup>1164</sup>

١٨٩- هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ  
 وَجَعَلَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا لِيَسْكُنَ إِلَيْهَا  
 فَلَمَّا تَغَشَّاهَا  
 حَمَلَتْ حَمْلًا خَفِيفًا  
 فَمَرَّتْ بِهِ  
 فَلَمَّا أَثْقَلَتْ  
 دَعَا اللَّهَ رَبَّهُمَا لَئِنْ آتَيْنَا صَالِحًا

1160 *Hufi* is usually construed to mean 'eager or anxious in search of' the preposition following here is *an=* concerning about. Some commentators (including Raḡīb) understand it in this passage to mean 'well acquainted'. In xix 47, with the preposition *bi* following it it signifies 'well disposed to', 'favourable to', 'good to', 'kind to'.

1161 A warner to all and a bringer of glad tidings to those who have faith because they will profit by the glad tidings. As every one is invited to faith, the glad tidings are *offered* to all but they are not necessarily accepted by all.

1162 Cf n 1 and n 504, where the construction is explained.

1163 The mystery of the physical birth of man as it affects the father and the mother, only touches the imagination of the parents in the later stages when the child is yet unborn and yet the life stirs within the body of the expectant mother. The coming of the new life is a solemn thing and is fraught with much hope as well as much unknown risk to the mother herself. The parents in their anxiety turn to God. If this feeling of solemnity, hope, and looking towards God were maintained after birth all would be well for the parents as well as for the rising generation. But the attitude changes, as the verses following show.

1164 *goodly faith* includes the following ideas: sound in body and mind, healthy, righteous, of good moral disposition.

We vow we shall  
(Ever) be grateful "

- 190 But when He giveth them  
A goodly child, they ascribe <sup>1165</sup>  
To others a share in the gift  
They have received  
But God is exalted  
High above the partners  
They ascribe to Him

- 191 Do they indeed ascribe  
To Him as partners things  
That can create nothing,  
But are themselves created ?

- 192 No aid can they give them,  
Nor can they aid themselves !

- 193 If ye call them to guidance,  
They will not obey  
For you it is the same  
Whether ye call them  
Or ye hold your peace ! <sup>1166</sup>

- 194 **W**erily those whom ye  
Call upon besides God  
Are servants like unto you <sup>1167</sup>  
Call upon them, and let them  
Listen to your prayer,  
If ye are (indeed) truthful !

- 195 Have they feet to walk with ?  
Or hands to lay hold with ?

لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الشَّاكِرِينَ ○

١٩٠- فَلَمَّا آتَاهُمَا صَالِحًا

جَعَلَا لَهُ شُرَكَاءَ

فِي مَا آتَاهُمَا

فَتَعَلَى اللَّهِ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ○

١٩١- أَيْشُرْكُونَ مَا لَا يَخْلُقُ شَيْئًا

وَهُمْ يُخْلَقُونَ ○

١٩٢- وَلَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ لَهُمْ نَصْرًا

وَلَا أَنْفُسَهُمْ يَنْصُرُونَ ○

١٩٣- وَإِنْ تَدْعُوهُمْ إِلَى الْهُدَى

لَا يَنْبَغُواكُمْ سِوَاءَ عَلَيْكُمْ

أَدْعُونَهُمْ أَمْ أَنْتُمْ صَامِتُونَ ○

١٩٤- إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ

عِبَادٌ أَمْثَلُكُمْ فَادْعُوهُمْ

فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا الْكَلِمَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ○

١٩٥- أَلَهُمْ أَرْجُلٌ يَمْشُونَ بِهَا

أَمْ لَهُمْ أَبْطَانٌ يَبْطِشُونَ بِهَا

1165 When the child is born the parents forget that it is a precious gift of God — a miracle of Creation which should lift their minds up to the higher things of God. Instead their gradual familiarity with the new life makes them connect it with many superstitious ideas or rites and ceremonies or they take it as a matter of course as a little plaything of the material world. This leads to idolatry or false worship or the setting up of false standards, in derogation of the dignity of God.

1166 When false worship takes root, the teacher of Truth finds much to discourage him. As far as he is concerned it seems as if he has produced no effect. Yet his duty is to continue his work, in the spirit of verse 199 below, forgiving all opposition, teaching what is right, and not joining the ignorant in their attitude of doubt and indecision.

1167 False gods whether idols, or deified men or ideas and superstitions have no existence of their own independent of God's creation. They are God's creatures and like servants are subject to His authority. Deified men are not real men, but false ideas of men. They cannot help themselves, how can they help others ?

Or eyes to see with ?  
Or ears to hear with ?  
Say "Call all your gods,<sup>1168</sup>  
Scheme (your worst) against me,  
And give me no respite!

196 "For my Protector is God,  
Who revealed the Book  
(From time to time),  
And He will choose  
And befriend the righteous

197 "But those ye call upon  
Besides Him, are unable  
To help you, and indeed  
To help themselves "

198 If thou callest them  
To guidance, they hear not  
Thou wilt see them  
Looking at thee, but  
They see not <sup>1169</sup>

199 ~~Be~~ old to forgiveness,  
Command what is right,  
But turn away from the  
ignorant <sup>1170</sup>

200 If a suggestion from Satan  
Assail thy (mind),<sup>1171</sup>

أَمْ لَهُمْ أَعْيُنٌ يُبْصِرُونَ بِهَا أَمْ لَهُمْ  
أُذَانٌ يَسْمَعُونَ بِهَا قُلْ ادْعُوا شُرَكَاءَكُمْ  
ثُمَّ كِيدُوا فَلَا تُنْظَرُونَ ○

١٩٦- إِنْ وَلِيَ اللَّهُ  
الَّذِي نَزَّلَ الْكِتَابَ  
وَهُوَ يَتَوَلَّى الصَّالِحِينَ ○

١٩٧- وَالَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ لَا  
يَسْتَطِيعُونَ نَصْرَكُمْ وَلَا أَنْفُسُهُمْ يَنْصُرُونَ ○

١٩٨- وَإِنْ تَدْعُوهُمْ إِلَى الْهُدَى  
لَا يَسْمَعُوا وَتَرَاهُمْ يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَيْكَ  
وَهُمْ لَا يُبْصِرُونَ ○

١٩٩- خُذِ الْعَفْوَ وَأْمُرْ بِالْعُرْفِ  
وَأَعْرِضْ عَنِ الْجَاهِلِينَ ○

٢٠٠- وَإِذَا يَنْزِعُكَ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ نَزْعٌ

1168 Here is a test and a challenge If the false gods had any power or even existence, collect them all together, and, says the man of God, Let them do their worst against me They cannot, because the whole thing is based on a superstition and a chimæra

1169 The beauty and righteousness of Mustāfa's life were acknowledged on all hands, until he received the mission to preach and to fight against evil What happened then? Evil erected barricades for itself It had eyes but it refused to see It had ears, but it refused to hear It had intelligence, but it blocked up its channels of understanding Even now after thirteen centuries and a half, a life of unexampled purity probity justice, and righteousness is seen in false lights by blind detractors

1170 God comforts the Apostle and directs his mind to three precepts (1) to forgive injuries, insults, and persecution, (2) to continue to declare the faith that was in him, and not only to declare it, but to act up to it in all his dealings with friends and foes, (3) to pay no attention to ignorant fools, who raised doubts or difficulties, hurled taunts or reproaches or devised plots to defeat the truth they were to be ignored and passed by, not to be engaged in fights and fruitless controversies, or conciliated by compromises.

1171 Even a man of God is but human He might think that revenge or retaliation, or a little tactful silence when evil stalks abroad, or some compromise with ignorance, might be best for the cause He is to reject such suggestions.

Seek refuge with God,  
For He heareth and knoweth  
All things

فَاسْتَعِذْ بِاللّٰهِ  
اِنَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ۝

- 201 Those who fear God,  
When a thought of evil  
From Satan assaults them,  
Bring God to remembrance,  
When lo! they see (aright) ! 1172

۲۰۱- اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ اَتَّقَوْا  
اِذَا مَسَّهُمْ طَائِفٌ مِّنَ الشَّيْطٰنِ  
تَذَكَّرُوْا فَاِذَا هُمْ مُبْصِرُوْنَ ۝

- 202 But their brethren (the evil  
ones) 1173  
Plunge them deeper into error,  
And never relax (their efforts)

۲۰۲- وَاِخْوَانُهُمْ يَمُدُّوْنَ لَهُمْ فِي الْغَيِّ  
ثُمَّ لَا يُقْصِرُوْنَ ۝

- 203 If thou bring them not  
A revelation, 1174 they say  
"Why hast thou not  
Got it together?"  
Say "I but follow  
What is revealed to me  
From my Lord  
This is (nothing but)  
Lights from your Lord, 1175  
And Guidance, and Mercy,  
For any who have Faith"

۲۰۳- وَاِذَا لَمْ تَأْتِهِمْ بِآيَةٍ  
قَالُوْا لَوْلَا اجْتَبَيْنٰهَا  
فَلَوْلَا اَتَيْنَاكَ مَا يُوحٰى اِلَىٰ مَن رَّبِّيْ  
هٰذَا بَصَائِرُ مِّنْ رَّبِّكُمْ  
وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةٌ  
لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُوْنَ ۝

- 204 When the Qurān is read,  
Listen to it with attention,

۲۰۴- وَاِذَا قُرِئَ الْقُرْاٰنُ فَاسْمِعُوْا لَهُ

1172 God protects His own as no one else can. He is the sure refuge — and the only one—for men of faith. If we are confused or angry, being blinded by this world, He will open our eyes.

1173 We go back to consider the ungodly whom we left at verse 198 in order to be taught our behaviour towards evil. The forces of evil never relax their efforts to draw their brethren" (those who go into their family) deeper and deeper into the mire of sin and destruction.

1174 'Sign' here I think means specially an Āyat of the Holy Qurān. The infidels did not believe in revelation, and used to taunt the Holy Apostle as much as to say that he used to put together words and promulgate them as revelation. The answer is contained in the sentence that follows. No human composition could contain the beauty, power and spiritual insight of the Qurān. Without inspiration it is impossible to suppose that a man, with or without literary and philosophic training, could produce such a book as the Qurān.

1175 'Lights' eyes, faculty of spiritual insight. The revelation is for us (1) spiritual eyes, (2) guidance, and (3) mercy. (1) is the highest in degree, just as a blind man, if he is given eyes and the faculty of sight, is at once removed into an entirely new world, so those Who can reach the stage of spiritual insight pass into and become citizens of a wholly new spiritual World. (2) is next in degree, the man of the world can act up to the teaching about right conduct and prepare for the Hereafter. (3) is the Mercy of God, free to every one, saint and sinner, who sincerely believes and puts his trust in God.

And hold your peace  
That ye may receive Mercy

وَأَنْصِتُوا لِعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ٥

205 And do thou (oh reader !)  
Bring thy Lord to remembrance  
In thy (very) soul,  
With humility and in reverence,  
Without loudness in words,  
In the mornings and evenings,  
And be not thou  
Of those who are unheedful

٢٠٥- وَأَذْكُرْكَ فِي نَفْسِكَ تَضَرُّعًا وَ  
خِيفَةً وَدُونَ الْجَهْرِ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ  
بِالْغَدُوِّ وَالْأَصَالِ  
وَلَا تَكُنْ مِنَ الْغَافِلِينَ ٥

206 Those who are near <sup>1176</sup>  
To thy Lord, disdain not  
To do Him worship  
They celebrate His praises,  
And bow down before Him <sup>1177</sup>

٢٠٦- إِنَّ الَّذِينَ عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ  
لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِهِ  
وَيُسَبِّحُونَهُ وَلَهُ يَسْجُدُونَ ٥



1176 The higher you are in spiritual attainment the more is your desire and your opportunity to serve and worship your Lord and Cherisher and the Lord and Cherisher of all the worlds and the greater is your pride in that service and that worship

1177 At this stage a *Sajda* or prostration is indicated as symbolical of our humble acceptance of the privilege of serving and worshipping God — a fitting close to a *Sāra* in which we are led, through a contemplation of the stories of the Messengers of God, to the meaning of revelation and its relation to our moral and spiritual progress

## APPENDIX IV

## Egyptian Chronology and Israel (see vii 104, n 1072)

In order to get some idea of the comparative chronology of Egypt and Israel, we must first consider what data we have for Egyptian chronology. Israel's surviving records date from a time many centuries later than Israel's contact with Egypt. On the other hand Egypt's records in monuments, inscriptions, tombs, etc., are rich and absolutely reliable as far as they go.

Of the surviving old civilizations, Egypt and China go back furthest in time with historical material. Egypt has the more interest for us, because geographically she was centrally situated, and she influenced and was influenced by almost every important cultural movement in Asia, Europe, and Africa. Nothing happened in Mediterranean history that had not some points of contact with Egypt.

The first broad division in Egyptian chronology is between the pre-Dynastic and the Dynastic periods. The pre-Dynastic period is all pre-history. But recent researches have thrown a great deal of light on the culture of that period, and we know many more details about the arts and tools of that period in Egypt than we do for the corresponding periods of pre-history in other countries.

With the first Egyptian Dynasty of rulers begins the Dynastic period. What were the Egyptian Dynasties, and why is so much prominence given to them in Egyptian chronology? The reason is that though we can form a graphic idea of the sequence of events and in many cases of the details of events, arts and crafts, manners and customs, cults and ceremonies, and social and economic conditions in the Dynastic period, we are not yet able, except for occasional and isolated glimpses, to give any accurate figures of early dates to connect them with our chronology B.C. On the other hand we have abundant materials to justify us in placing certain events or personages or ideas in some division of the Dynastic scheme. We can say that such and such ideas held sway under the 18th Dynasty or that such and such invasion, outwards or inwards, took place at the close of the 14th Dynasty.

The Dynastic scheme rests mainly on the lists and fragments preserved from the writings of one Manetho, an Egyptian priest and annalist, who lived under Ptolemy I and Ptolemy II (B.C. 313-246), the inheritors of the Egyptian portion of Alexander's Empire. For his Egyptian history in Greek he had access to Egyptian records. His scheme of Dynasties therefore supplies a rough chronological frame-work into which can be fitted our ever increasing detailed knowledge derived from Egyptian monuments, tombs, and excavations. His first Dynasty begins with the unification of Upper and Lower Egypt, but its actual date B.C. has been placed at between such wide margins as 5500 B.C. and 3300 B.C.

The two Egypts may be considered distinct ethnical and perhaps geographical divisions, which tend to assimilate when they are united politically, but whose physical



characteristics are different, as also their outlook when there is political division. Lower Egypt looks to the Mediterranean, and its population is mixed, containing almost all the Mediterranean and Arab elements, while Upper Egypt looks to interior Africa (Nubia, Sudan, Abyssinia, etc.), and its population tends to have more and more African characteristics. The whole of Egypt has had a ribbon development, the population and cultivation being confined to the banks of the Nile. Without the Nile Egypt would be just a desert forming a link in the long chain of tropical and sub-tropical deserts stretching from the Sahara, the Libyan desert, the Arabian deserts, through the Persian, Baluchistan, Sindh, and Rajputana deserts, to the Turkī and Gobi deserts in Central Asia. But Upper Egypt is purely a long irregular line along the banks of the Nile, while Lower Egypt has the broad fan-like delta in which the many mouths of the Nile run into a very irregular coast line extending over about 200 miles. Lower Egypt had (and has) much marsh land, and its low-lying configuration was subject to many physical changes, in the same way as invasions and foreign immigrations gave its population a less stable character. Its cities, such as Sais and Tanis (Zoan), were also less stable in character, and Memphis (near the site of modern Cairo) had to be just above the Delta. On the other hand the Capitals in Upper Egypt, such as Thebes (or No), with their magnificent temples and tombs were safe above Nile waters in the highest inundations until the modern dam of Asuān was built many miles above them. The boundary between Upper and Lower Egypt was never clearly defined, because in spite of frequent interruptions in the unity of the country, the identification of Egypt with the Nile made the unity of Egypt a political and economic necessity. The present boundary of Lower Egypt is just south of Cairo, making Lower Egypt include just the Delta. The tract between Cairo and Assiut is sometimes called Middle Egypt and is distinguished from the rest of Upper Egypt, which is higher up the river.

There being such wide variations in the estimate of ancient dates by competent authorities, the only practicable course is to refer ancient events to Dynasties according to Manetho's scheme. In the later dates it is sometimes possible to express a date in approximate figures B.C., but such figures are uncertain, whereas the sequence of Dynasties may be taken to be a stable fact in Egyptian history, although some of Manetho's material, when it can be tested, has proved to be inaccurate. But we have only Manetho second-hand. The inaccuracies may be due not to Manetho but to his transmitters. Thirty one such Dynasties are reckoned, and they may be grouped into Periods as follows —

I The Old Kingdom, Dynasties I to VIII, including (a) the first three Dynasties, with a new orientation in Egyptian Art, and (b) Dynasties IV to VI, the Pyramid Period, during which the Great Pyramid and the second and third Pyramids of Ghizeh were built. The capital now came to Lower Egypt, to the site of Memphis, near modern Cairo.

II The Middle Kingdom, Dynasties IX to XVII. In Dynasties IX and X the centre of gravity moved from Memphis in Lower Egypt to Middle Egypt. In the XIIth Dynasty many of the great monuments of and near Thebes (Karnak, Luxor, etc.), were constructed. Perhaps the movement higher up the river was necessitated by foreign invasions in Lower Egypt. Dynasties XV to XVII are called the Hyksos Period,

when a Syrian Dynasty was established in Lower Egypt, with a sort of lordship over the native Dynasties of Upper Egypt, and international connections in other Mediterranean countries. We shall presently speak of the Hyksos Pharaohs, who have been placed in the 17th, 18th, and even 26th century B C

III The New Empire, Dynasties XVIII to XX, crowded with events The dates now begin to be more definite the period may be placed between about 1580 B C and about 1200 B C The foreign Hyksos were driven out, the empire was extended to Syria and Nubia, perhaps even the Euphrates was reached Some of the most wonderful works of Egyptian art date from this period

IV The Dynasties of the Delta, Dynasties XXI to XXXI, including a Dynasty at Sais (on one of the western branches of the Deltaic Nile) But Assyrian and Persian invasions were now weakening the power of Egypt The dates now become more certain The XXIst Dynasty was roughly about 1100 B C The XXVIIth Dynasty was ended by the invasion of the Persians under Cambyses in 525 B C The Persians held sway (with Egyptian local dynasties under them) until the XXXIst Dynasty, when the last Pharaoh fled to Ethiopia about 340 B C

V The Egyptian Dynasties have now ended, and we are in firm history the Macedonian Period after Alexander's conquest, 332 B C, and the Dynasty of the Ptolemies, 323 B C to 30 B C, and the Roman Period 30 B C to 639 A D, after which the Arab and Turkish conquests evolved modern Egypt and Muslim Egyptian civilisation

Having cleared the chronological background, we are now in a position to examine the data about Israel's stay in Egypt in order to see if we can get some idea of the time in Egyptian history when the contact took place We saw that Dynasties XV to XVII were concerned with the Hyksos (or Shepherd) kings They were foreigners from Asia, but it is not quite clear exactly what race they belonged to Josephus supposed that they were Israelites, but that theory is untenable It has been conjectured that they were Phœnicians, or Amalekites, or Hittites In any case they were Semites They founded a city called Zoan (Tanis) on one of the eastern branches of the Deltaic Nile, and were in close communication with the Hittite city of Hebron in the south of Palestine That would be their own city, but their capital would probably be the same as the old Egyptian capital at Memphis when they were well-established They are credited with having invented the Semitic alphabet of 22 letters, which (through the Phœnician) is the parent of all modern alphabets Their invention probably helped in the process of converting old Egyptian Hieroglyphics from picture-writing to phonetic writing As the Hyksos had close relations with Hebron in Palestine, and Abraham and Israel had settled in the Palestine country, a nexus would be established, by which the first Israelites would be attracted to Zoan in Egypt It must also be remembered that southern Palestine was a poor country and subject to frequent famines, while Deltaic Egypt was well watered by the Nile, and suffered from famines only on the rare occasions when the Nile failed to inundate The attraction of Egypt for the famine-stricken lands of the neighbourhood would therefore be strong And this is proved in the story of Joseph and his brethren

Can we form even a rough idea of the dates of the Hyksos occupation? At the latest the Hyksos period ended about 1600 B C. Renan is therefore probably not

far wrong when he places the Hyksos occupation about 2000 B C. Possibly a date between 2000 B C and 1600 B C may be nearer the mark. If we suppose Joseph to have been the Wazīr of one of the Hyksos Pharaohs in the Delta, there is no great violence of probabilities in the suggestion, as Joseph and the Hyksos would be of kindred races. In that case Joseph's date would fall somewhere between the 19th and the 17th century B C.

No reference to Joseph or Moses has been found in Egyptian records. The solitary reference to Israel (*Ysra'el*,  $r=1$ ) in a stele of Mer-en Ptah or Mineptah (about 1225 B C) seems to refer to Israel in Palestine rather than to Israel in Egypt. At this we need not wonder, as the Pharaoh who honoured Joseph was strictly speaking only a foreigner. When the reaction against the Hyksos took place and the Hyksos were overthrown, the Egyptians would not probably be anxious to remember the interrupted period or to preserve its memory. The Pharaoh who "knew not Joseph" looked upon the Israelites as contemptible slaves, not worthy of a thought except when they revolted, and then only as a despised race fit to be punished and kept in its place. It may be noticed, however, that the land of Goshen in which Israel dwelt and multiplied between the time of Joseph and the time of the Exodus, was a frontier tract of Egypt in the neighbourhood of the Hyksos city of Zoan in the Delta.

In seeking the approximate date of Moses, we must again look to the probabilities of Egyptian history. It was formerly the received opinion that Rameses II (say about 1250 B C) was the Pharaoh who oppressed Israel in Egypt, and that the exodus may have taken place under his immediate successor Mineptah (say about 1225 B C). The vigorous policy of Rameses II and the spirit of his time would be consistent with this view. But this date is almost certainly too late. There are indications pointing to the Israelites having already been settled in Canaan by this time. The Hyksos were turned out by the XVIIIth Dynasty, which established the New Empire in the 16th century B C. Thothmes I (Tethmosis I, about 1540 B C) is more likely, in the first flush of his nationalist campaign, to have oppressed the Israelites and led to the exodus. His date fits in better. And his character also accords with the description in sacred history. He centralised the monarchy and made it a military autocracy. Militarism went with the lust of war and foreign conquest. He carried his arms as far as the Euphrates. Slaves, plunder, and foreign tribute made Egypt opulent and arrogant, and he added many monuments to Thebes. We can imagine him in his splendid Court, scarcely paying any attention to Moses, and viewing all his complaints with amusement mingled with contempt and impatience. But retribution was to come in God's good time. The men who followed God's message—Israel in the time of Solomon (a little after 1000 B C), and more completely, the Muslims in the time of Hadhrat 'Umar and his successors—became lords of the East and the West (Q. vii 137), and ancient Egypt's glories were eventually buried in the sands.

It was this same Pharaoh, Thothmes I, who took for his partner on the Throne his daughter Hatshepsut. If Thothmes was the Pharaoh in Moses's story, we may suppose that it was this same celebrated strong-minded lady, Pharaoh's daughter, who found the child Moses (Exod ii 10), and brought him to her mother to be adopted.

into the family (Q xxviii 9) Like her father, she was a great supporter of the national cults Moses was nurtured in the palace, and learned all the wisdom of the Egyptians, then reputed to be the wisest of the nations With their own wisdom he foiled them Thus in God's Plan the enemies of God and the enemies of Israel (Q xx 39) were the very ones who were used as instruments for the purposes of God and the salvation of Israel

References E B *Egypt* D A Mackenzie *Egyptian Myth and Legend* Renan, *History of the People of Israel* 3 vols , Joseph Cattani Pasha, *Coup d oeil sur la chronologie de la nation Egyptienne* Paris 1931 Sir W M Flinders Petrie, *History of Egypt* 3 vols *Cambridge Ancient History* vol I, Chapter IV (iii)

## APPENDIX V.

Egyptian Religion and its Steps Towards Islam (see vii 123, n 1082)

This should be read along with Appendix IV in which a discussion on Egyptian chronology will be found

God's Plan works silently but surely among all nations and at all times In the most fantastic forms of religion appear gleams of His Light of Unity, calls to Islam, i.e., man's submission of his will to the Universal Will (see C. 7-10) From that point of view the religious history of Egypt from the most ancient times to the present day is most interesting, as is indeed the religious history of any country for which we have records of thought and development That of India touches us dearly, but it is not directly relevant in a translation and exposition of the Qurān The religious history of Israel is just an earlier chapter of the history of Islam, and our doctors and commentators have written in great detail about it Sometimes, I think, they have attached exaggerated importance to it But none of them has paid much attention to Egypt from this point of view Our people know very little of ancient Egypt and have shown little interest in it It is a healthy sign that modern Egypt is showing much interest in it, and I hope that it will in time recognise in it a valuable unfolding of religious ideas leading up to Islam

The field of Egyptology is vast and is being extended every day by the diligent researches of archaeologists and scholars I do not propose to write an essay on Egyptian religion But I wish to put forward a few considerations to show how God's Plan and Will worked steadily, in Egypt as elsewhere, towards a greater and greater appreciation, on the part of the people, of God's true nature and the real purpose of religion The eternal light of Unity and Islam shines in many ways, and its rays give light to the spiritual aspirations of mankind in the darkest periods With a gifted and artistic people like the Egyptians, their religious sense was led, in spite of many rebuffs, gradually to a purer and purer conception of man's eternal destiny, until Muḥammad's Message was preached to them in the very language in which it was originally preached in Arabia And that language, Arabic, became and is now the language of the Egyptian people themselves

In the pre-Dynastic Egypt there must already have been a great deal of development in the religious conceptions which afterwards showed such vitality in Dynastic Egypt. The Old Kingdom, including the Pyramid Period, shows that the Egyptian mind was obsessed with the certainty of life after death It was also impressed with ideas of grandeur, order, and precision in the universe,—ideas which found eloquent expression in the grand conceptions and mathematical symmetry and simplicity of its architecture Its massive dignity and repose are also reflected in the faces and poses of the figures in Egyptian statuary and painting The unending expanse and the mystery of the desert seem to have acted on the Egyptian mind like a soporific and made it less active in mundane affairs and less practical in speculation than that of some other races of similar gifts. What mysteries are typified in the proportions of the

Pyramids and their internal galleries and mysterious chambers, we shall probably never know with certainty. But a haunting sense of death and of the other world seems to oppress us in its atmosphere as it does in the grim scenes of the "Book of the Dead". As Prof. T. E. Peet remarks (*Cambridge Ancient History*, vol. I, p 354), "the Egyptian mind closely associated together men, gods, and the dead as merely three species of a single genus". Each of these it considered was subject to an irresistible force called *Heka* or *Heka* hence the force of Magic, Incantations to the Dead, and Rites and Formularies in daily life.

The Middle Kingdom brings us face to face with fresh ideas. We have no data with which to appraise the influence of foreign cults and foreign ideas during the period. But knowing, as we do, how Egypt acted as a magnet to the world at large and how many points of contact the Euphrates valley civilisations and the Nile valley civilisations had with each other, we may well suppose a broadening of Egyptian culture and civilisation in consequence. The Hyksos may have been Egyptianised in Egypt, but they could not have failed in their turn to contribute Syrian and Semitic ideas to Egypt. Among these were Monotheism, a patriarchal organisation of society, and an impatience of priestly or caste domination. These must have contrasted strangely with the chaotic Pantheon of countless deities, the lash driven slaves living huddled in the cities, and the dedicated priests and richly endowed temples which catered for the privileged few, but lived by the sweat of the brow of the unprivileged many.

The New Empire was the flowering period of Egyptian genius and requires special consideration. The crudities of the old pre-Dynastic chaotic Pantheon had been in process of attrition through the centuries. Local gods tended to be absorbed in general gods. Some sort of rationalisation and spiritualisation had been going on throughout the Dynastic period. A process of systematisation and unification was now consciously undertaken. The primitive worship of animals had gradually been transformed into a system of animal gods, with human bodies and animal heads. The human bodies represented the anthropomorphic tendencies, while the animal heads became types of qualities. For example, Anubis, with the dog emblem, was the door-keeper, the messenger, the custodian of the dead. Apis, or Hapis, the sacred bull of Memphis, symbolised the renewal of life, he was identified with Osiris, there were great rejoicings when a new Apis (a black bull calf) was found, and great mourning and costly burial when one died. Thoth, the god of wisdom and magic, was symbolised by an ibis, that stately, mute, mysterious bird of passage in the Nile valley.

In addition to the symbolism of animals, there was the worship of the great phenomena of nature, the Nile, the giver of agricultural bounties to Egypt, and the sun, which, as the god Ra, became the supreme god in Egypt. Then there was the myth of Osiris the good, who came to the earth for the benefit of mankind, was killed by the malice of Set, the power of evil, and reigns as the judge of the dead in the lower world. His faithful wife Isis and his falcon-eyed son Horus figure in the mysteries. It is possible that the Osiris myth itself arose from a myth of the Nile or the sun.

There was a gradual perception of Monotheism, a realisation that God is One and above names. But the picturesque forms, festivals, and representations remained, and as the priests of all grades enjoyed special privileges and monopolised knowledge and learning, the people remained ignorant. They were exploited and practically

enslaved It was in the midst of such conditions that Moses came. He came to rescue his own people from the bondage of Egypt, a task which he performed But it must not be forgotten that his mission was also addressed to the king of Egypt and to the people of Egypt Here also he sowed the seed, although he did not reap the fruit The king, the Pharaoh, was almost looked upon as a god, and looked upon himself as a god He had to be humbled, and he was humbled But God's purpose is not merely to humble It is also to lead from darkness to light If the particular Pharaoh was too hard-hearted to respond, his descendant in the fifth or sixth generation made a public confession of the One True God, as we shall see presently What of the people? The wise men of Egypt, who were confronted with Moses, repented of their deceit, and saw the light by the grace of God, according to the Quranic narrative Though they were threatened and perhaps martyred, their fate must have opened the eyes of the people and prepared them for the remarkable religious revolution which we shall now proceed to describe

The Pharaoh of the Exodus was probably Thothmes I (about 1540 B C) The Pharaoh Amenophis IV (about 1350 B C) adopted the worship of the One Supreme God as the State religion He had been a high priest of the Sun-god at Heliopolis, but had begun to look upon the multiplicity of gods in the Egyptian Pantheon as a blot on Egyptian religion His original name had been Amen hotep ("Ammon is satisfied") as being devoted to Ammon the great god of the State religion at Thebes He changed his name to Akhen-Aton ("Pious to Aton") and worshipped the Supreme God under the name of Aton He abandoned the city of Thebes as being devoted to Ammon and founded a new city near the site of what is now Tel al-Amarna, between Thebes and Memphis, and dedicated it to Aton the Supreme God The clay tablets discovered at Tel al-Amarna in 1887 throw much light on the relations of Egypt with her tributaries in Syria The alphabet on the tablets is the Cuneiform of Assyria the language is Semitic, and closely akin to Hebrew Unfortunately the religious revolution of Amenophis IV did not last The city was only inhabited twenty years His second son-in law and successor, Tutenkh Aton, carried out a counter-revolution He went back from Aton to Ammon, changed his own name to Tutenkh-Amen, and restored the temples at Karnak and the cult of Ammon The recent finds from his tombs show what exquisite skill the artists and artisans of Egypt had then attained The pure religion remained established on the throne only for two generations, but we need not suppose that it was rooted out of the minds of the people

The later Dynasties, XXI to XXXI, saw the decay of Egypt as a Power The Assyrian and Persian invasions ultimately extinguished the freedom of Egypt With the coming of Alexander the Great (332 B C) and the foundation of the city of Alexandria, a new era dawned on the culture of Egypt It mingled with Greek and other thought, and became cosmopolitan in nature Already, in the time of Herodotus, the sensitive Greek mind had been impressed with the mystery and wisdom of Egypt It now made the soil of Egypt cosmopolitan in religion, culture, and philosophy The Ptolemaic dynasty held a broadly tolerant attitude, and even imported the rites of Serapis from the Black Sea and assimilated him to Apis the Bull of Memphis. The new cult of Serapis spread widely over the East, and later, when Egypt came under the Roman Empire (30 B C.) into the very heart of that Empire The Serapion in Alexandria, with its famous library, became for a few centuries the true intellectual



centre of the world. The very unfavourable picture drawn of Egyptian religion in Lytton's *Last Days of Pompeii* must be referred to the somewhat hybrid cult of Isis as practised in foreign lands rather than to Egyptian religion generally. What course real Egyptian religion took in this period we have no means of judging accurately. In the light of earlier and later events we may suppose that the steady honest industrious Egyptian peasantry and people went on pursuing the even tenor of their career with the same mystic longing for a practical religion which was preparing them for purer forms of worship and a juster distribution of the fruits of labour.

Alexandria in the first centuries of the Christian era was resounding with the shouts of every kind of philosophy and the teaching of every kind of religious sect, from East and West, North and South, but mainly from the East, which has ever been a nursery of religious ideas. A special quarter was assigned to the Jews in the city. It became the true centre of Hellenised Judaism, and may claim Josephus among its disciples. Neo Pythagoreanism, Neo Platonism, Gnosticism, and Manichæism found a home there. Mithraism, which was so widely spread in the Roman Empire, especially in the army, in the first three centuries A.D., was probably represented on its philosophic side in Alexandria. Its intermixture of races, creeds, philosophies, and religions, produced an atmosphere of chaos, which was not cleared until the advent of Islam.

But from a religious point of view our greatest interest in Egypt in the first seven centuries of the Christian era is in the development of Christianity itself. It is difficult to say when exactly Christianity began to displace the older Egyptian cults. But when Christianity was well-established, we find Egypt one of its most important centres. But the new Christianity which was evolved out of the ruins of Christ's simple teaching had four distinct attitudes towards organisation, speculative doctrine, asceticism and mysticism. (1) The native Egyptian or Coptic Church was contemplative, ascetic, and mystical. Monasticism became so rampant that it seriously affected the growth of population and degraded the position of women. (2) The Alexandrian school developed on Greek lines,—political, ambitious, speculative, philosophical, and liable to break up into numerous sects and heresies, each party trying to dominate and put down the others as heretical by the strong arm of the law. (3) The Bishop of Rome, when the seat of the Empire was transferred to Constantinople in 330, gradually developed political power in Italy. He inherited the Roman genius for organisation, and the invasion of the Germanic tribes gave him an opportunity not only of extending the Roman Catholic Church over the whole of Central and Western Europe, but of establishing the Church as superior to the State when the Papacy became an established political power. (4) The Orthodox Eastern Church, and all the sects which it fought in the East, tended ultimately to vanish before the advance of Islam. Had it not been for the vast Slav territories over which it obtained sway, in and around Russia and afterwards in Siberia, the Orthodox Eastern Church would have been reduced to a negligible position like the Coptic Church in Egypt. With pretensions to rule the State, it had yet become, in Kingsley's words in "Hypatia", the "stipendiary slave official" of the Empire, sharing in all its effete corruption.

But we are anticipating. Before the Roman Catholic Church parted from the Orthodox Eastern Church, the united Church fought with and suppressed many so-called "heresies", some of which represented the views of primitive Christianity,



and the scene of many of these doctrinal fights was in Egypt. The one that interests us most is Arianism. Arius was an Alexandrian Presbyter early in the fourth century A.D. and fought hard for the doctrine of Unity, the simple conception of the Eternal God, as against all the hair-splitting and irrational distinctions in the nature and persons of the Godhead, which finally crystallised in the doctrine of the Trinity, propounded and maintained with much personal acrimony by Athanasius. Athanasius himself was born in Alexandria and became Bishop of Alexandria. He may be counted as the father of Orthodoxy (as now understood in Christianity) and the real systematiser of the doctrine of the Trinity—"three in one and one in three." Up to the third century A.D. the Unitarians had been in the majority in the Christian Church, though subtle metaphysicians had started disputes as to the meaning of "God becoming man," the Logos or the Word, the Power of God, whether the Father and the Son were of the same substance or of similar substance, whether the Son could be said to have been created by the Father, and numerous questions of that kind. They do not interest us now, but they rent the Christian world into many jarring sects until the mission of our Holy Apostle dissipated the mists and re-established the doctrine of Unity on a firm and rational basis.

As I have said, the Christian Churches in the East as well as the Germanic nations which came later into the fold adhered to Unity although not in the pure form which was made clear in the Holy Qur'an. The issue was joined between Arius and Athanasius, and the first General Council of the Christian Church, that of Nicæa (in Bithynia) in 325, decided against Arius and unitarianism. The controversy, however, still continued to rage until 381, when the Council of Constantinople, called by the Emperor Theodosius the Great, confirmed the Nicene doctrine of the Trinity and declared it to be the only Orthodox one. Though controversies, protests, and persecutions continued long afterwards, we may take that date as the date of the fall of Christianity. Even in Western Christianity, as late as 496, Clovis the Frankish king was the only Christian sovereign sophisticated enough to follow the subtle doctrine of the Trinity. The others were brought into line by political power later.

The Christian creed became narrower and narrower, less and less rational, more and more inclined to use earthly weapons to suppress the eternal truth of God. In 415 the Jews were expelled from Alexandria. In the same year and in the same city the beautiful, modest, eloquent philosopher and mathematician, Hypatia, was murdered,—an outrage against both rationalism and the intellectual and religious position of woman in human society. The murder was a particularly brutal one. She was dragged from her chariot in the streets, stripped naked, and suffered a lingering death in a Christian Church. Her body was then cut to pieces and burned. The worst feature of the crime was the complicity of the Patriarch of Alexandria, who was not only the chief religious dignitary of the Orthodox Church in Egypt but the *de facto* repository of political power. Meanwhile the native Christian community—the Coptic Church,—which had all along clung to the Monophysite doctrine, a corrupt form of Unitarianism, was out of the pale, and its members were held down as a depressed class by their Orthodox brethren. The latter also, basking in official sunshine, collected power and property into their own hands. As Kingsley remarks in *Hypatia*, the Egyptian Church "ended as a mere chaos of idolatrous sects, persecuting each other for metaphysical propositions, which, true or false, were equally heretical in their mouths because they used them as watchwords for division." The social conditions

produced an amount of discontent, for which the redress came only with the advent of Islam.

It was for this reason that the Copts and the inhabitants of Egypt generally welcomed the forces of Islam under 'Amr as deliverers in 639 A D. The power was taken over by the victorious army of Islam from Cyrus (called Muqauqas in Arabic through the Coptic), the Patriarch of Alexandria, but it was used by the army of deliverance to enlarge the liberties of the Egyptians, to admit them into the universal brotherhood of Islam, and to improve the resources of the country for the benefit of the people. Except a negligible remnant of conservatives the Egyptians as a nation accepted the religion, the language, and the institutions of the Arabs and embarked on a new course of history, which it is unnecessary to follow further in this note.

It should be remarked, however, that what happened in Egypt happened generally in western Asia. The jarring sectarian irrational religions gave place before the triumphant religion of Unity and Brotherhood, and the Byzantine Empire receded and receded until it was swept out of existence. The feeble efforts made by the Emperor Leo the Isaurian in 726-731 to restrict the use of images were a reflection of the puritanical zeal of Islam. But they did not succeed in the area of his authority, and they completely alienated the Papacy from the Eastern Orthodox Church. The Bishop of Rome had been consolidating his power, and in the person of Gregory I (590-604) had already assumed the control of Italy and was seeking the aid and support of the Barbarian invaders who eventually became the pillars of the Papacy. The final and open rupture between the Orthodox Eastern Church and the Roman Catholic Church took place in 1054. But the earlier dates are remarkable. After the birth of the Holy Apostle of Islam the disruption of the Orthodox Christian Church (which had now become an anachronism) began. When Islam was making its triumphant march in the 8th century after Christ, the original (Greek) Church began to take some steps to put its own house in order. But it had lost its mission, and the new Islamic people took its place. The Western Church has since worked on definitely new lines, and its offshoots among the Protestant Churches have, consciously or unconsciously, been influenced by the broad principles of Islam. What the course of future religion may be and how God will unfold His All-Wise Plan it is not given to us mortals to know. In the Islamic Brotherhood many changes have taken place and are taking place. Egypt, in spite of her many vicissitudes in the Islamic period, is in the intellectual forefront among the Arabic-speaking nations of Islam. We pray that her people may be guided, through their educational, cultural, and religious channels, to work with a new spirit for the progress of Islam and the glory of God.

**References** Those given for Appendix IV, and in addition Sir E. A. Wallis Budge *Gods of the Egyptians* and his latest book *From Fetish to God in Ancient Egypt* (Oxford 1934). Budge *Book of the Dead*. A. W. Shorter *Introduction to Egyptian Religion* (1931). Adolf von Harnack *History of Dogma* 7 vols., is an elaborate detailed German account of how Christian Dogma grew up and may be read in an English translation, a handier book is R. W. Mackay, *Rise and Progress of Christianity* (1854). C. Kingsley's novel *Hypatia* gives a good picture of social and religious conditions in Christian Egypt in the fifth century. On the identity of al Muqauqas (Pkauchios) with Cyrus, see Dr A. J. Butler's "Arab Conquest of Egypt," (Oxford 1902), pp 508-562.

## INTRODUCTION TO SŪRA VIII (*Anfāl*)

In the previous Introductions to the Sūras we have shown how each Sūra is a step or gradation in the teaching of the Qurān. The first seven Sūras, comprising a little less than one-third of the Qurān, form a gradation, sketching the early spiritual history of man and leading up to the formation of the new Ummat or Community of the Holy Apostle. Now we begin another gradation, consolidating that Ummat and directing us as to various phases in our new collective life.

In this chapter we have the lessons of the Battle of Badr enforced in their larger aspects: (1) the question of war booty, (2) the true virtues necessary for fighting the good fight, (3) victory against odds, (4) clemency and consideration for one's own and for others in the hour of victory.

As regards booty taken in battle, the first point to note is that that should never be our aim in war. It is only an adventitious circumstance, a sort of windfall. Secondly, no soldier or troop has any inherent right to it. A righteous war is a community affair, and any accessions resulting from it belong to God, or the community or Cause. Thirdly, certain equitable principles of division should be laid down to check human greed and selfishness. A fifth share goes to the Commander, and he can use it at his discretion, for his own expenses, and for the relief of the poor and suffering, and the orphans and widows (viii 41). The remainder was divided, according to the Prophet's practice, not only among those who were actually in the fight physically, but all who were in the enterprise, young and old, provided they loyally did some duty assigned to them. Fourthly, there should be no disputes, as they interfere with internal discipline and harmony.

These principles are followed in the best modern practice of civilised nations. All acquisitions of war belong absolutely to the Sovereign as representing the Commonwealth. In the distribution of booty not only the actual captors but also the "joint captors" and the "constructive captors" share. See Sir R. Phillimore's *International Law* (1885), vol. 3, pp. 209-10, 221-24.

As regards the military virtues, which are the types of virtues throughout life, we are shown by an analysis of the incidents of Badr how, against the greatest odds, God's help will give the victory if men are fighting not for themselves but for the sacred Cause of God. And directions are given for the treatment of prisoners and for maintaining the solidarity of the Muslim community.

The date of this Sūra is shortly after the battle of Badr, which was fought on Friday the 17th of Ramadhān in the second year of the Hījra. A short account of the battle is given in n. 352 to iii 13.

**Summary**—All booty is really at the disposal of God's Apostle under directions from God. Men of faith accept and obey these directions with cheerfulness. Victory and the prize of victory come from God, as was proved at Badr (viii 1-19 and C 89).

Obedience and intelligent discipline, zeal, faith, and gratitude to God, are the true passports to success and protection from the assaults of evil. Evil will be piled up with evil and destroyed (viii 20-37 and C 90).

The battle of Badr was a testing time, and showed how virtue and valour can conquer against odds. Steadfastness and obedience, faith, courage, and fearlessness, due preparation and free expenditure of resources and energy,—these are expected from you by God, and His help is all sufficient (viii 38-64 and C 91).

Even tenfold odds against you do not count if you are fighting for truth and faith against enemies of truth and faith, but remember clemency and consideration in the hour of victory (viii 65-75, and C 92).

C 89—Fight the good fight, but dispute not  
(viii 1-19)

About the prize that is for God  
To give Men of faith act and obey  
'Tis nobler to fight for Truth  
Than to seek worldly gain  
To the pure in faith God will give  
The mind and the resources to conquer.  
They but fight, with no thought  
Of ever turning back the victory  
Should be ascribed to God, not men.

## Sura VIII

*Anfal*, or the Spoils of War

*In the name of God, Most Gracious,  
Most Merciful*

1 They ask thee<sup>1178</sup> concerning  
(Things taken as) spoils of war  
Say "(Such) spoils are  
At the disposal of God<sup>1179</sup>  
And the Apostle so fear  
God, and keep straight  
The relations between yourselves  
Obey God and His Apostle,  
If ye do believe "

2 For, Believers are those  
Who, when God is mentioned,  
Feel a tremor in their hearts,  
And when they hear  
His Signs rehearsed, find  
Their faith strengthened,  
And put (all) their trust  
In their Lord ,

3 Who establish regular prayers  
And spend (freely) out of  
The gifts We have given  
Them for sustenance<sup>1180</sup>

4 Such in truth are the Believers'  
They have grades of dignity  
With their Lord, and forgiveness,  
And generous sustenance



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

۱- يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْأَنْفَالِ  
قُلِ الْأَنْفَالُ لِلَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ  
فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَصْلِحُوا ذَاتَ بَيْنِكُمْ  
وَاطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ  
إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ ۝

۲- إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِرَ اللَّهُ  
وَجِلَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَإِذَا تُلِيَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ  
آيَاتُهُ زَادَتْهُمْ إِيمَانًا  
وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ ۝

۳- الَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ  
وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ ۝

۴- أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ حَقًّا لَهُمْ دَرَجَاتُ  
عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ وَرِزْقٌ كَرِيمٌ ۝

1178 The occasion was the question of the division of the booty after the battle of Badr See Introduction to this Sura

1179 Booty taken in a lawful and just war does not belong to any individual If he fought for such accessory rewards he fought from wrong motives It belongs to the Cause in this case the Cause of God as administered by His Apostle Any portions given out to individuals are accessory gifts windfalls from the bounty of the Commander The chief thing is to remain staunch to the Cause of God and have no differences among those who stand for the Cause Our internal relations must be kept straight they must not be disturbed by cupidity or worldly considerations of gain, for any windfalls of this kind should be outside our calculations.

1180 *Sustenance* again in both the literal and the metaphorical sense The object is to warn off from the love of booty and worldly wealth Why do we want these? To all true Believers God gives generous sustenance in any case, in both senses, but especially in the spiritual sense, for it is coupled with forgiveness and grades of dignity before God, in the next verse.

5 Just as<sup>1181</sup> thy Lord ordered thee  
Out of thy house in truth,  
Even though a party among  
The Believers disliked it,

6 Disputing with thee concerning  
The truth after it was made  
Manifest, as if they were  
Being driven to death  
And they (actually) saw it<sup>1182</sup>

7 Behold ! God promised you  
One of the two (enemy) parties,<sup>1181</sup>  
That it should be yours  
Ye wished that the one  
Unarmed should be yours,  
But God willed  
To justify the Truth  
According to His words,  
And to cut off the roots  
Of the Unbelievers

8 Let Him justify Truth  
And prove Falsehood false,  
Distasteful though it be  
To those in guilt

هـ- كَمَا أَخْرَجَكَ رَبُّكَ مِنْ بَيْتِكَ بِالْحَقِّ  
وَأَنَّ فَرِيقًا مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ لَكَرِهُونَهُ ۝

هـ- يُجَادِلُونَكَ فِي الْحَقِّ بَعْدَ مَا  
تَبَيَّنَ كَأَنَّمَا يُسَاقُونَ إِلَى الْمَوْتِ  
وَهُمْ يَنْظُرُونَ ۝

هـ- وَإِذْ يَعِدُكُمُ اللَّهُ إِحْدَى الطَّائِفَتَيْنِ  
أَنَّهَا لَكُمْ وَتُوَدُّونَ أَنَّ غَيْرَ ذَاتِ  
الشُّوْكَوَةِ تَكُونُ لَكُمْ  
وَيُرِيدُ اللَّهُ أَنْ يُخَيِّقَ الْحَقَّ بِكَلِمَتِهِ  
وَيَقْطَعَ دَابِرَ الْكَافِرِينَ ۝

هـ- لِيُخَيِّقَ الْحَقَّ وَيُبْطِلَ الْمَاطِلَ  
وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُجْرِمُونَ ۝

1181 *Just as* the comparison takes us back to the first clause in verse 4 'such in truth are the Believers'—just as thy Lord also is just and true in ordering thee out to fight against heavy odds when the alternative was to fight against the unarmed caravan which would have given thee abundant booty almost without a fight. To appreciate the full meaning remember that the word *haqq*, translated 'truth' means also 'right' just what is becoming." The true Believers believe in truth and do right in obedience to God's command. So God also in asking them to fight against odds is not asking them to rush to destruction but is providing them with an opportunity of vindicating the truth in scorn of worldly advantage. And He made good His promise by giving them victory.

1182 In verse 6 we have again the word 'truth'—some of the Believers disputed concerning the truth—they did not feel sure that the course recommended was the true and right course. They thought it would be certain destruction—they saw death almost staring them in the face.

1183 Just before Badr there were two alternatives before the Muslims in Medina, to save themselves from being overwhelmed by the Meccan Quraish with all their resources from the rich Syrian trade. One, which had least danger for the time being and also promised much booty, was to fall upon the Quraish caravan returning from Syria to Mecca richly laden and led by Abū Sufyan with only 40 men unarmed. From a worldly point of view this was the safest and most lucrative course. The other alternative which was actually adopted on the recommendation of the Apostle by the guidance of God, was to leave the booty alone and march out boldly against the well armed and well equipped Quraish army of 1000 men coming from Mecca. The Muslims had no more than 300 men, ill armed to oppose to this force. But if they could defeat it, it would shake the selfish autocracy which was in possession of Mecca. By God's help they won a splendid victory, and the standard of Truth was established, never to be lowered again.

- 9 Remember ye implored  
The assistance of your Lord,  
And He answered you  
"I will assist you  
With a thousand of the angels,  
Ranks on ranks" 1184

٩- اِذْ تَسْتَغِيثُونَ رَبَّكُمْ  
فَاسْتَجَابَ لَكُمْ اِنِّي مُبْدِكُمْ  
بِاَلْفِ مِّنَ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةِ مُرْدِفِيْنَ ۝

- 10 God made it but a message  
Of hope, and an assurance  
To your hearts (in any case) 1185  
There is no help  
Except from God  
And God is Exalted, Wise

١٠- وَمَا جَعَلَهُ اللّٰهُ اِلَّا بَشٰرٰى وَلِتَطْمَِٔنَّ  
بِهٖ قُلُوْبُكُمْ وَمَا النَّصْرُ اِلَّا مِنْ عِنْدِ  
اللّٰهِ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيْمٌ ۝

## SECTION 2

- 11 Remember He sent down  
A sort of drowsiness 1186  
To give you calm as from  
Himself, and he caused  
Rain to descend on you 1187  
From heaven, to clean you  
Therewith, to remove from you  
The stain of Satan, 1188  
To strengthen your hearts,  
And to plant your feet  
Firmly therewith

١١- اِذْ يُغَشِّيكُمُ الثُّغٰاسَ اَمْنَةً وَمِنْهُ  
وَيُنَزَّلُ عَلَيْكُمْ مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ مَآءً  
لِّيَطَهِّرَكُمْ بِهِ  
وَيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمْ رِجْزَ الشَّيْطٰنِ  
وَلِيُثَبِّتَ عَلٰى قُلُوْبِكُمْ  
وَيُثَبِّتَ بِهِ الْاَقْدَامَ ۝

- 12 Remember thy Lord inspired  
The angels (with the message)  
"I am with you give  
Firmness to the Believers

١٢- اِذْ يُوحٰى رَبُّكَ اِلَى الْمَلٰٓئِكَةِ  
اِنِّىْ مَعَكُمْ فَخَيَّرُوا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا

1184 Cf iii 123 125 126 The number of angels a thousand at Badr and three thousand and five thousand at Uhud is probably not to be taken literally but to express a strength at least equal to that of the enemy

1185 All help comes ultimately from God In special cases it may take special forms to put heart into us and to fit in with our feelings and our psychology

1186 Cf iii 154 for Uhud Calm (presence of mind) is essential in battle and in all posts of danger If the mind is too much in a state of excitement it cannot carry out a well considered or well concerted plan This spirit of calm confidence on the part of the Muslims won against the blustering violence of the Quraish

1187 The rain was welcome for many reasons (1) Water was scarce both for drinking and ablutions (2) the Muslim band without baggage or equipment or comforts found that their thirst aggravated their fatigue (3) the sand was loose and the rain consolidated it and enabled them to plant their feet firmly

1188 "Stain of Stain" both literally and figuratively Dirt is physically a symbol of evil, and the Muslims were particular about ablutions before prayer But the rain also refreshed their spirits and removed any lurking doubts in their minds (suggestions of the Evil One) that victory might be impossible in such adverse circumstances

I will instil terror  
Into the hearts of the Unbelievers  
Smite ye above their necks  
And smite all their  
Finger-tips off them " 1189

- 13 This because they contended  
Against God and His Apostle  
If any contend against God  
And His Apostle, God  
Is strict in punishment

- 14 Thus (will it be said) " Taste ye  
Then of the (punishment)  
For those who resist God,  
Is the penalty of the Fire "

- 15 Oh ye who believe !  
When ye meet  
The Unbelievers  
In hostile array, 1190  
Never turn your backs  
To them

- 16 If any do turn his back  
To them on such a day—  
Unless it be in a stratagem  
Of war, or to retreat  
To a troop (of his own)—  
He draws on himself  
The wrath of God,  
And his abode is Hell,—  
An evil refuge (indeed) !

- 17 It is not ye who  
Slew them, it was God

سَأَلِقُنْ فِي قُلُوبِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا الرُّعْبَ  
فَأَضْرِبُوا قُوتَ الْأَعْنَاقِ  
وَاضْرِبُوا مِنْهُمْ كُلَّ سَنَانٍ ۝

۱۳- ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ شَاقُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ  
وَمَنْ يُشَاقِقِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ  
فَأَنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ۝

۱۴- ذَلِكُمْ فَذُوقُوهُ  
وَأَنَّ لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابَ النَّارِ ۝

۱۵- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا  
إِذَا لَقِيتُمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا زَحَفًا  
فَلَا تُولُوهُمْ الْأَدْبَارَ ۝

۱۶- وَمَنْ يُؤَلِّهِمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ دُبرَةً  
إِلَّا مُتَحَرِّفًا لِقِتَالٍ أَوْ مُتَحَيِّزًا إِلَى فِئَةٍ  
فَقَدْ بَاءَ بِغَضَبٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ  
وَمَأْوَاهُ جَهَنَّمُ  
وَيُسْأَلُ الْمَصِيدُ ۝

۱۷- فَلَمْ تَقْتُلُوهُمْ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ قَتَلَهُمْ

1189 The vulnerable parts of an armed man are above the neck. A blow on the neck, face or head finishes him off. If he has armour it is difficult to get at his heart. But if his hands are put out of action, he is unable to wield his sword or lance or other weapon and easily becomes a prisoner.

1190 The laws of spiritual fight are exactly similar to those enforced by military virtue and discipline. Meet your enemy fairly and squarely not rashly but after due preparation. *Zahfan* in the text (*meeting in hostile array*) implies a slow and well-planned proceeding towards a hostile army. When once in combat carry it through there is no room for second thoughts. Death or victory should be the motto of every soldier. It may be death for himself individually but if he has faith there is triumph in either case for his cause. Two exceptions are recognised (1) *reculer pour mieux sauter* to go back in order to jump forward, or to deceive the enemy by a feint, (2) if an individual or body is, by the chances of battle, isolated from his own force he can fall back on his force in order to fight the battle. There is no virtue in mere single handedness. Each individual must use his life and his resources to the best advantage for the common cause.



When thou threwest (a handful <sup>1191</sup>  
Of dust), it was not  
Thy act, but God's  
In order that He might  
Test the Believers  
By a gracious trial <sup>1192</sup>  
From Himself for God  
Is He Who heareth  
And knoweth all things

وَمَا رَمَيْتَ إِذْ رَمَيْتَ  
وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ رَمَىٰ  
وَلِيَبْلُوَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ مِنْهُ بَلََاءٌ حَسَنًا  
إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ۝

18 That, and also because  
God is He Who makes feeble  
The plans and stratagems  
Of the Unbelievers

۱۸- ذَٰلِكُمْ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ  
مُوهِنُ كَيْدِ الْكَافِرِينَ ۝

19 (Oh Unbelievers!) if ye prayed  
For victory and judgment, <sup>1193</sup>  
Now hath the judgment  
Come to you if ye desist  
(From wrong), it will be  
Best for you if ye return  
(To the attack), so shall We  
Not the least good  
Will your forces be to you  
Even if they were multiplied  
For verily God  
Is with those who believe!

۱۹- إِنْ تَسْتَغِيثُوا فَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ الْفَتْحُ  
وَأِنْ تَنْتَهُوا فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ  
وَأِنْ تَعُودُوا عُدَّ  
وَلَنْ تُغْنِيَ عَنْكُمْ فِئَتُكُمْ شَيْئًا  
وَلَوْ كَثُرَتْ ۚ  
وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۝

C 90 — Be ready to obey God's call, and to hold  
(iii 20 37) A 11 else as naught He will give you  
The light, turn away all evil from you,  
And forgive you your sins and shortcomings  
Ever keep in remembrance His mercies and grace  
The godless may try to keep men  
From God, but they will not thrive  
They will be hurtled together to destruction

1191 When the battle began the Holy Apostle prayed and threw a handful of dust or sand at the enemy symbolical of their rushing blindly to their fate. This had a great psychological effect. Every act in the battle is ascribed to God as it was in His cause and it was not undertaken except by His command.

1192 Numerically the odds against the Muslims were three to one. In other ways they were at a disadvantage of arms and equipment they had but little while the enemy were well found they were inexperienced while the Quraish had brought their foremost warriors. In all this there was a test, but the test was accompanied by gracious favours of countless value. Their Commander was one in whom they had perfect faith and for whom they were ready to lay down their lives. The rain refreshed them. Their spirit was unshaken, and they were fighting in God's cause. Thus the trial or test became itself a blessing.

1193 *Fatḥ* = victory decision judgment. The Quraishin Mecca had prayed for victory, they were confident that their superior numbers equipment and experience would be decisive. With a play on the word they are told that the decision had come and the victory—but not in the sense they had hoped for!



## SECTION 3

- 20 Oh ye who believe !  
Obey God and His Apostle,  
And turn not away from him  
When ye hear (him speak)
- 21 Nor be like those who say,  
"We hear," but listen not <sup>1194</sup>
- 22 For the worst of beasts  
In the sight of God  
Are the deaf and the dumb, <sup>(11)</sup>  
Those who understand not
- 23 If God had found in them  
Any good, He would indeed  
Have made them listen  
(As it is), if He had made them  
Listen, they would but have  
Turned back and declined (faith)
- 24 Oh ye who believe !  
Give your response to God  
And His Apostle, when He  
Calleth you to that which  
Will give you life, <sup>1196</sup>  
And know that God  
Cometh in between a man <sup>1197</sup>  
And his heart, and that  
It is He to Whom  
Ye shall (all) be gathered

٢٠- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ  
وَلَا تَوَلَّوْا عَنْهُ وَأَنْتُمْ تَسْمَعُونَ ○

٢١- وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ قَالُوا سَمِعْنَا وَ  
هُمْ لَا يَسْمَعُونَ ○

٢٢- إِنَّ شَرَّ الدَّوَابِّ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الضُّمُ  
الْبُكْمُ الَّذِينَ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ ○

٢٣- وَلَوْ عَلِمَ اللَّهُ فِيهِمْ  
خَيْرًا لَاسْمَعَهُمْ  
وَلَوْ أَسْمَعَهُمْ لَتَوَلَّوْا وَهُمْ مُّعْرِضُونَ ○

٢٤- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا  
اسْتَجِيبُوا لِلَّهِ وَلِلرَّسُولِ  
إِذَا دَعَاكُمْ لِمَا يُحْيِيكُمْ  
وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَحُولُ بَيْنَ الْمَرْءِ  
وَقَلْبِهِ وَأَنَّهُ إِلَهِهِ يُخْشَرُونَ ○

1194 Cf II 93

1195 Cf II 18

1196 There are two points to note (1) Note that after God and His Apostle are mentioned, the pronoun and verb in the next clause are singular everything that God's Apostle put forward as an injunction came by inspiration from God the Apostle made his will coincide completely with God's will (2) We are asked actively to give our response in deed and life to the call of duty and conscience, for that call leads to real life the life eternal even though it may apparently mean in this world the loss of things that make life dear or the loss of life itself If we refer this to Jihād i.e. fighting in and for the Cause both literally and metaphorically the meaning becomes quite clear

1197 If the human heart is refractory and refuses to obey the call of God that is not the end of the matter God has to be reckoned with The refusal may be because there was some pet human scheme which the heart of man was not willing to give up for God's Cause Will that scheme come to fruition by refusing to serve the higher Cause? By no means Man proposes but God disposes If the scheme or motive was perfectly secret from men it was not secret from God The heart is the innermost seat of man's affections and desires but between this seat and man himself is the presence of the Omnipresent

25 And fear tumult or oppression,<sup>1198</sup>  
Which affecteth not in particular  
(Only) those of you who do wrong  
And know that God  
Is strict in punishment

26 Call to mind when ye  
Were a small (band),  
Despised through the land,  
And afraid that men might  
Despoil and kidnap you,<sup>1199</sup>  
But He provided a safe asylum  
For you, strengthened you  
With His aid, and gave you  
Good things for sustenance  
That ye might be grateful

27 **O**h ye that believe!  
Betray not the trust  
Of God and the Apostle,  
Nor misappropriate knowingly  
Things entrusted to you<sup>1200</sup>

28 And know ye  
That your possessions

٢٥- وَاتَّقُوا فِتْنَةً  
لَا تُصِيبُ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا مِنْكُمْ خَاصَّةً  
وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ○

٢٦- وَاذْكُرُوا إِذْ أَنْتُمْ قَلِيلٌ  
مُسْتَضْعَفُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ  
تَخَافُونَ أَنْ يَتَخَطَّفَكُمُ النَّاسُ  
فَأُولَئِكَ وَآيَاتُكُمْ يَنْصُرُهُ  
وَرَزَقَكُم مِّنَ الظَّيْبِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ○

٢٧- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَخُونُوا اللَّهَ  
وَالرَّسُولَ وَتَخُونُوا أَمْنَكُمْ  
وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ○

٢٨- وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّكُمْ أَمْوَالُكُمْ

1198 *Fitnat* has many meanings (1) the root meaning is trial or temptation as in ii 102 and viii 28 (2) an analogous meaning is trial or punishment as in i 74 (3) tumult or oppression as in ii 193 and here and in viii 39 (4) there is here (viii 25) the further shade of meaning suggested discord sedition civil war

This warning against internal discord or tumult was very necessary in the Civil Wars of early Islam and was never more necessary than it is now For it affects innocent and guilty alike

1199 On the immediate occasion the Muslims were reminded that they were a small band in Mecca despised and rejected living in a state of insecurity for their persons their lives their property and those of their dependants persecuted and exiled and how by the grace of God they found a safe asylum in Medina how they found friends and helpers how their many needs were cared for and how at length they gathered strength and numbers enough to defeat the forces of godlessness injustice and oppression

But for every individual in some form or other the lesson applies His spiritual life begins humbly he is despised and laughed at perhaps persecuted and shut out from ordinary privileges open to all, but God gives him strength friends spring up for him and he is sustained until his highest spiritual desires are gradually fulfilled

1200 Trusts may be of various kinds (1) property goods credit etc (2) plans confidences secrets, etc (3) knowledge talents opportunities etc which we are expected to use for our fellow men Men may betray the trust of God and His Apostle by misusing property or abusing the confidence reposed in them or the knowledge or talents given to them On that special occasion when the plans for the protection of God's worshippers against annihilation were of special importance the Apostle's trust and confidence had to be guarded with special care Occasions for scrupulously respecting the trust and confidence of our fellow men occur every day in our life and few of us can claim perfection in this respect Hence the special distinction of the man of God who earned the title of *Al Amin*, the one who was true to every trust reposed in him

And your progeny  
Are but a trial,<sup>1201</sup>  
And that it is God  
With whom lies  
Your highest reward

## SECTION 4

29. **O**h ye who believe!  
If ye fear Him,  
He will grant you a Criterion<sup>1202</sup>  
(To judge between right and wrong),  
Remove from you (all) evil  
(That may afflict) you,  
And forgive you  
For God is the Lord  
Of grace unbounded

30. **R**emember how the Unbelievers  
Plotted against thee, to keep  
Thee in bonds, or slay thee,  
Or get thee out (of thy home)<sup>1203</sup>  
They plot and plan,  
And God too plans,  
But the best of planners<sup>1204</sup>  
Is God

31. **W**hen Our Signs are rehearsed  
To them, they say "We  
Have heard this (before)  
If we wished, we could  
Say (words) like these  
These are nothing  
But tales of the ancients"<sup>1205</sup>

وَأُولَادُكُمْ فِتْنَةٌ  
وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عِنْدَكَ أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ ٢٩

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنْ تَتَّقُوا اللَّهَ  
يَجْعَلْ لَكُمْ فُرْقَانًا  
وَيَكْفُرْ عَنْكُمْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ  
وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ  
وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ ٣٠

وَأَرَادَ يَنْكُرُ بِكَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا  
لِيُثْبِتُوكَ أَوْ يَقْتُلُوكَ أَوْ يُخْرِجُوكَ  
وَيَنْكُرُونَ وَيَنْكُرُ اللَّهُ  
وَاللَّهُ خَيْرُ الْمَاكِرِينَ ٣١

وَأِذَا تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُنَا قَالُوا قَدْ  
سَمِعْنَا لَوْ نَشَاءُ لَقُلْنَا مِثْلَ هَذَا  
إِنْ هَذَا إِلَّا آسَاطِيرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ ٣٢

1201 A big family—many sons—was considered a source of power and strength in 10 116 So in English, a man with many children is said to have his quiver full (cf Psalms cxxvii 4 5 As arrows are in the hands of a mighty man so are the children of thy youth Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them they shall not be ashamed but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate" So with property and possessions they add to a man's dignity power and influence But both possessions and a large family are a temptation and a trial They may turn out to be a source of spiritual downfall, if they are mishandled, or if the love of them excludes the love of God

1202 Cf ii 53 and ii 185 The battle of Badr is called the *Furqan* in Muslim theology, because it was the first trial of strength by battle in Islam between the powers of good and evil Evil was defeated and those who had real faith were tested and sorted out from those who had not faith enough to follow the banner of Faith See also viii 41 and n 1210

1203 The plots against Mustafa in Mecca aimed at three things They were not only foiled, but God's wonderful working turned the tables and brought good out of evil in each case (1) They tried to hold the Apostle in subjection in Mecca by putting pressure on his uncles, relatives, and friends But the more they persecuted, the more the little Muslim community grew in faith and numbers (2) They tried to injure or slay him But the wonderful example of his humility, perseverance, and fearlessness furthered the cause of Islam (3) They tried to get him and his out of their homes But they found a new home in Medina from which they eventually reconquered not only Mecca but Arabia and the world

1203 A Cf iii 54

1204 Cf vi. 25

32 Remember how they said  
 "Oh God! if this is indeed  
 The Truth from Thee,  
 Rain down on us a shower  
 Of stones from the sky,  
 Or send us a grievous Penalty " 120a

33 But God was not going  
 To send them a Penalty  
 Whilst thou wast amongst them,  
 Nor was He going to send it  
 Whilst they could ask for pardon

34 But what plea have they  
 That God should not punish  
 Them, when they keep out  
 (Men) from the Sacred Mosque—  
 And they are not its guardians?  
 No men can be its guardians  
 Except the righteous but most  
 Of them do not understand

35 Their prayer at the House  
 (Of God) is nothing but  
 Whistling and clapping of hands  
 (Its only answer can be),  
 "Taste ye the Penalty  
 Because ye blasphemed "

36 The Unbelievers spend their  
 wealth  
 To hinder (men) from the path  
 Of God, and so will they  
 Continue to spend, but  
 In the end they will have  
 (Only) regrets and sighs,

٣٢- وَإِذْ قَالُوا اللَّهُمَّ إِن كَانَ هَذَا هُوَ  
 الْحَقُّ مِنْ عِنْدِكَ فَأَمْطِرْ عَلَيْنَا جَرَارَةً  
 مِنَ السَّمَاءِ أَوْ ائْتِنَا بِعَذَابٍ إِلِيمٍ ۝

٣٣- وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُعَذِّبَهُمْ  
 وَأَنْتَ فِيهِمْ وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ مُعَذِّبَهُمْ  
 وَهُمْ يَسْتَغْفِرُونَ ۝

٣٤- وَمَا لَهُمْ أَلَّا يُعَذِّبَهُمُ اللَّهُ وَهُمْ  
 يَصُدُّونَ عَنِ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَمَا  
 كَانُوا أَوْلِيَاءَهُ إِنْ أَوْلِيَائِهِ إِلَّا الْمُتَّقُونَ  
 وَلَكِنْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ۝

٣٥- وَمَا كَانَ صَلَاتُهُمْ عِنْدَ الْبَيْتِ  
 إِلَّا مُكَاءٌ وَتَضْبِيبٌ  
 فَذُوقُوا الْعَذَابَ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْفُرُونَ ۝

٣٦- إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ  
 لِيَصُدُّوا عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ  
 فَسَيُنفِقُونَهَا ثُمَّ تَكُونُ عَلَيْهِمْ حَسْرَةً

120a This was actually a challenge thrown out by the Infidels in Mecca not seriously but as a taunt. The answer is in the two following verses. God punishes in His own good time not according to the foolish and frivolous taunts of the Unbelievers. While the Holy Apostle was with them he—the Mercy of the Worlds—conferred a certain amount of immunity to them. There were also other Muslims just men who asked for forgiveness. And God keeps the door of repentance and forgiveness open to all as long as they make it possible. But let them not be puffed up with pride or think that they have lasting immunity. What became of Abu Jahl? He and some of his greatest warriors were slain at Badr. The little autocratic clique that prevented Muslims from access to the Sacred Mosque had their Nemesis not long afterwards. They pretended to be its guardians. But were they? Could they be? Only the righteous could be true guardians to God's places of worship and particularly to the Central House of the Ka'ba. It was to be a place of pure worship while their idolatrous worship was mere mummery—whistling and clapping of hands. All false worship advertises itself by noise and unseemly riot. It is said that the Pagans used to go naked round the Ka'ba.

At length they will be overcome  
And the Unbelievers will be  
Gathered together to Hell,—

- 37 In order that God might separate<sup>1206</sup>  
The impure from the pure,  
Put the impure, one on another,  
Heap them together, and cast them  
Into Hell They will be  
The ones to have lost

ثُمَّ يُغْلَبُونَ هُ  
وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِلَىٰ جَهَنَّمَ يُخْشَرُونَ ٣٧  
لِيُخَيِّضَ اللَّهُ الْخَبِيثَاتِ مِنَ الطَّيِّبِ وَيَجْعَلَ  
الْخَبِيثَاتِ بَعْضُهُ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ فَيَرْكَبَهُ جَمِيعًا  
فَيَجْعَلَهُ فِي جَهَنَّمَ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ ٣٨

C 91 —The battle of Badr brought to an issue  
(VIII 38 64) The fight between Truth and Unbelief  
It was the Day of Differentiation  
Not for spoils was it won, nor by numbers,  
But by courage and planning, union of wills,  
And pooling of strength and resources —  
Above all by the help of God,  
Whose help is ever all sufficient

#### SECTION 5

- 38 Say to the Unbelievers,  
If (now) they desist (from Unbelief),  
Their past would be forgiven them,  
But if they persist, the punishment  
Of those before them is already  
(A matter of warning for them)

٣٨ قُلْ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِنْ يَنْتَهُوا يُغْفَرْ  
لَهُمْ مَا قَدْ سَلَفَ وَإِنْ يَعُودُوا فَقَدْ  
مَضَتْ سُنتُ الْأَوَّلِينَ ٣٩

- 39 And fight them on  
Until there is no more  
Tumult or oppression,  
And there prevail  
Justice and faith in God<sup>1207</sup>  
Altogether and everywhere,  
But if they cease, verily God<sup>1208</sup>  
Doth see all that they do

٣٩ وَقَاتِلُوهُمْ حَتَّىٰ لَا تَكُونَ فِتْنَةٌ  
وَيَكُونَ الدِّينُ كُلُّهُ لِلَّهِ  
فَإِنْ ائْتَمَرُوا  
فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ٤٠

- 40 If they refuse, be sure  
That God is your Protector—  
9 The Best to protect  
30 And the Best to help

٤٠ وَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ مُوَلِّكُمْ  
نِعْمَ الْمَوْلَىٰ وَنِعْمَ النَّصِيرُ ٤١

1206 It is only when matters are brought to an issue that evil is separated distinctly from the good. Then evil consorts with evil and good with good. The evil will be piled into a heap. When the cup is full the punishment will come. There will be no mistake about it. The good should not be discouraged because in fighting against them all forces of evil join together and pool their resources together. The more they do so the easier is the final arbitrament. It is all in God's Plan.

1207 Cf II 193 and n

1208 If they cease from fighting and from the persecution of truth God judges them by their actions and their motives and would not wish that they should be harassed with further hostility. But if they refuse all terms, the righteous have nothing to fear. God will help and protect them.

- 41 **And** know that out of  
All the booty that ye  
May acquire (in war),  
A fifth share is assigned <sup>1209</sup>  
To God,—and to the Apostle,  
And to near relatives,  
Orphans, the needy,  
And the wayfarer, —  
If ye do believe in God  
And in the revelation  
We sent down to Our Servant  
On the Day of Testing,—<sup>1210</sup>  
The Day of the meeting  
Of the two forces  
For God hath power  
Over all things <sup>1211</sup>

- 42 **Remember** ye were  
On the hither side  
Of the valley, and they  
On the farther side,  
And the caravan <sup>1212</sup>  
On lower ground than ye  
Even if ye had made  
A mutual appointment  
To meet, ye would certainly  
Have swerved from the  
appointment <sup>1213</sup>

٣١- وَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا غَنِمْتُمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ  
فَإِنْ لِلَّهِ خُمُسُهُ وَلِلرَّسُولِ  
وَلِذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالسَّكِينِ  
وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ  
إِنْ كُنْتُمْ آمَنْتُمْ بِاللَّهِ  
وَمَا أَنزَلْنَا عَلَىٰ عَبْدِنَا يَوْمَ الْفُرْقَانِ  
يَوْمَ التَّلَاقِ الْجَمْعِ  
وَاللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ٥

٣٢- إِذْ أَنتُمْ بِالْعُدْوَةِ الدُّنْيَا  
وَهُمْ بِالْعُدْوَةِ الْقُصْوَىٰ  
وَالرَّكْبُ أَصْفَلَ مِنْكُمْ  
وَلَوْ تَوَاعَدْتُمْ  
لَاخْتَلَفْتُمْ فِي الْمِيعَادِ ٦

1209 The rule is that a fifth share is set apart for the Imam (the Commander) and the rest is divided among the forces. The fifth share reserved is expressed to be for God and the Apostle and for charitable purposes for those to whom charity is due. Ultimately everything is at the disposal of God and His Apostle (viii 1) but four fifths are divided and only one fifth is retained for the special purposes. The Imām has discretion as to the mode of division. In the Apostle's lifetime a certain portion was assigned to the Apostle and his near relatives.

1210 *Testing Furqān* Criterion between right and wrong decision between the forces of faith and unbelief. The battle of Badr is called by this name. See viii 29 and n 1202.

1211 God's power is shown in the events detailed in the three verses following (vv 42-44) leading to the complete victory of the Muslims over pagan Quraish.

1212 The little Islamic force from Medina went out to meet the big Meccan army and they met on the two sides of a valley at Badr while the Quraish caravan was on lower ground towards the sea, about 3 miles from Badr.

1213 They were all at cross purposes. The caravan was making for Mecca but scarcely thought it could get there. The Quraish force was trying to save the caravan and then annihilate the Muslims. The Muslims had decided to let the caravan alone but attack the Quraish army from Mecca which they thought was going to be small but which turned out to be big more than three times their number. Yet the two forces met precisely at the spot and at the time when a decisive battle should take place and the Muslims dispose of the pretensions of the Meccans. If they had carefully planned a mutual appointment they could not have carried it out more precisely.

On the Muslim side the few martyrs knew that the victory was theirs and those who survived the battle enjoyed the fruits of the victory. On the pagan side both those who died and those who lived knew fully the issue joined. Even psychologically both sides went in with full determination to decide the issue.

But (thus ye met),  
That God might accomplish  
A matter already enacted,  
That those who died might  
Die after a clear Sign  
(Had been given), and those who  
lived  
Might live after a Clear Sign  
(Had been given) And verily  
God is He who heareth  
And knoweth (all things)

- 13 Remember in thy dream  
God showed them to thee  
As few if He had shown  
Them to thee as many,  
Ye would surely have been  
Discouraged, and ye would  
Surely have disputed  
In (your) decision but God  
Saved (you) for He knoweth  
Well the (secrets) of (all) hearts

- 44 And remember when ye met,  
He showed them to you  
As few in your eyes,  
And He made you appear  
As contemptible in their eyes 1214  
That God might accomplish  
A matter already enacted  
For to God do all questions  
Go back (for decision)

## SECTION 6

- 45 ﴿٤٥﴾ Oh ye who believe !  
When ye meet a force,  
Be firm, and call God  
In remembrance much (and often),  
That ye may prosper
- 46 And obey God and His Apostle,  
And fall into no disputes,

وَلَكِنْ لِّيَقْضِيَ اللَّهُ أَمْرًا  
كَانَ مَفْعُولًا ۖ  
لِيَهْلِكَ مَنْ هَلَكَ عَنْ بَيِّنَةٍ  
وَيُحْيِيَ مَنْ حَيَّ عَنْ بَيِّنَةٍ  
وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَسَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ۝

٣٣- إِذْ يُرِيكُمُ اللَّهُ فِي مَنَامِكَ قَلِيلًا  
وَلَوْ أَرَاكُمْ كَثِيرًا لَفَشَلْتُمْ  
وَلَتَتَّاعِزَّعْتُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ  
وَلَكِنْ اللَّهُ سَلَمٌ  
إِنَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ ۝

٣٤- وَإِذْ يُرِيكُمُوهُمْ  
إِذِ التَّقَيْتُمْ فِي أَغْنِيكُمْ قَلِيلًا  
وَنَقَلَكُمْ فِي أَغْنِيهِمْ  
لِيَقْضِيَ اللَّهُ أَمْرًا كَانَ مَفْعُولًا  
وَرَأَى اللَّهُ تَرْجِعَ الْأُمُورَ ۝ ع

٣٥- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا لَقِيتُمْ فِئَةً  
فَانْبِئُوا وَادْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا  
لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ۝

٣٦- وَأَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَلَا تَنَازَعُوا

1214 The Muslim army though they knew their worldly disadvantage did not realise the full odds against them. The Meccans came exulting in any case and they despised the contemptible little force opposed to them. Even though they thought the Muslim force was twice as great as it was (in 13) still that number was contemptible when taken with its poor equipment. Both these psychological mistakes subverted the main Plan which was to bring the matter to a decisive issue, whether the Pagans of Mecca were to continue their arrogant oppression, or the religion of God was to be established in freedom and honour.

Lest ye lose heart  
And your power depart,  
And be patient and persevering  
For God is with those  
Who patiently persevere 1215

- 47 And be not like those  
Who started from their homes  
Insolently and to be seen of men,  
And to hinder (men)  
From the path of God 1216  
For God compasseth round about  
All that they do

- 48 Remember Satan made  
Their (sinful) acts seem  
Alluring to them, and said  
"No one among men  
Can overcome you this day,  
While I am near to you"  
But when the two forces  
Came in sight of each other,  
He turned on his heels,  
And said "Lo! I am clear  
Of you, lo! I see  
What ye see not,  
Lo! I fear God, for God  
Is strict in punishment" 1217

### SECTION 7

- 49 Lo! the Hypocrites say, and those  
In whose hearts is a disease 1218  
"These people,—their religion  
Has misled them" But  
If any trust in God, behold!  
God is Exalted, in might, Wise

فَتَقَشُّوْا وَتَذٰهَبَ رِيْضُكُمْ وَ  
اصْبِرُوْا

اِنَّ اللّٰهَ مَعَ الصّٰبِرِيْنَ ۝

۴۷- وَلَا تَكُوْنُوْا كَالَّذِيْنَ خَرَجُوْا  
مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ بِطَرَاوِيْءِ النَّاسِ  
وَيُصَدِّقُوْنَ عَنْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ  
وَاللّٰهُ بِمَا يَعْمَلُوْنَ مُحِيْطٌ ۝

۴۸- وَاِذْ زَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الشَّيْطٰنُ اَعْمَالَهُمْ  
وَقَالَ لَا غَالِبَ لَكُمْ الْيَوْمَ مِنَ النَّاسِ  
فَلَمَّا جَاءَ لَكُمْ فَلَمَّا تَرَاْتِ الْفِئْتَيْنِ  
نَكَصَ عَلَىٰ عَقِبَيْهِ وَقَالَ اِنِّيْ بَرِيْءٌ  
مِّنْكُمْ اِنِّيْ اَرٰى مَا لَا تَرَوْنَ  
اِنِّيْ اَخَافُ اللّٰهَ ۝  
وَاللّٰهُ شَدِيْدُ الْعِقَابِ ۝

۴۹- اِذْ يَقُوْلُ النّٰفِقُوْنَ  
وَالَّذِيْنَ فِيْ قُلُوْبِهِمْ مَّرَضٌ  
عَرَّهٗمْ وَاَلَا دِيْنُهُمْ ۚ وَمَنْ تَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللّٰهِ  
فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَزِيْزٌ حَكِيْمٌ ۝

1215 A fine description of the Muslim virtues which make for success and whose loss brings about humiliation and failure *Power* literally wind—the favourable wind for a sailing ship

1216 A true description of the Meccan army which met its doom

1217 It is the way with the leaders of evil when they find their cause lost that they wash their hands of their followers and leave them in the lurch. They see more clearly than their dupes. They are not simpletons; they know the consequences of the wrath of God. Satan's fear of God is terror combined with hatred—the very opposite of the feeling which is described in *Laqwa* viz., the desire to avoid doing anything against God's will, such desire being founded on trust in God and the love of God.

1218 Cf. n 10 for disease in the heart

Trust in God brings its own reward: our eyes are opened and we see how great good, and wise is the Cherisher of the Worlds. Others may sneer and despise. But the blessing of God keeps our minds fresh and our hearts contented.



50 If thou couldst see,  
When the angels take the souls  
Of the Unbelievers (at death),<sup>1219</sup>  
(How) they smite their faces  
And their backs, (saying)  
"Taste the Penalty of the blazing  
Fire—

51 "Because of (the deeds) which<sup>1220</sup>  
Your (own) hands sent forth  
For God is never unjust  
To His servants

52 "(Deeds) after the manner  
Of the People of Pharaoh  
And of those before them  
They rejected the Signs of God,  
And God punished them  
For their crimes for God  
Is Strong, and Strict in  
punishment

53 "Because God will never  
change<sup>1221</sup>  
The Grace which He hath bestowed  
On a people until they change  
What is in their (own) souls  
And verily God is He  
Who heareth and knoweth all  
things "

54. "(Deeds) after the manner  
Of the People of Pharaoh  
And those before them " <sup>1222</sup>  
They treated as false the Signs  
Of their Lord so We

٥٠- وَلَوْ تَرَىٰ إِذِ يَتَوَفَّى الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا  
الْمَلَائِكَةُ يَضْرِبُونَ وُجُوهَهُمْ  
وَأَدْبَارَهُمْ  
وَذُوقُوا عَذَابَ الْخَرِيقِ ۝

٥١- ذَٰلِكَ بِمَا قَدَّمْتُمْ أَيْدِيكُمْ  
وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ لَيْسَ بِظَلَّامٍ لِّلْعَبِيدِ ۝

٥٢- كَذَّابِ إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ ۖ وَالَّذِينَ مِن  
قَبْلِهِمْ كَفَرُوا بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ  
فَأَخَذَهُمُ اللَّهُ بِذُنُوبِهِمْ  
إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَوِيٌّ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ۝

٥٣- ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ لَمْ يَكُ مُغَيِّرًا  
نِّعْمَةً أَنعَمَهَا عَلَىٰ قَوْمٍ حَتَّىٰ يُغَيِّرُوا  
مَا بِأَنفُسِهِمْ  
وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ۝

٥٤- كَذَّابِ إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ ۖ  
وَالَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ  
كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِ رَبِّهِمْ

1219 In contrast to the taunt against those who trust in God that their religion has misled them," is shown the terrible punishment, after death of those who laughed at Faith

1220 The punishment is shown to be due to their own deeds of wrong, because God is never unjust to the least of His servants

1221 God bestows His grace freely but He never withdraws it arbitrarily Before He changes their state and circumstances, an actual state of rebellion and contumacy has arisen in their own souls, which brings about its inevitable punishment

1222 These words from the address of the angels are quoted again, in order to add the comment that follows Note that in verse 51, the words were that they rejected the Signs of God and were punished here the words are that they treated the Signs as false and were destroyed,—a higher degree of guilt deserved a severer punishment

Destroyed them for their crimes,  
And We drowned the People  
Of Pharaoh for they were all  
Oppressors and wrong-doers

فَأَهْلَكْنَاهُمْ بِذُنُوبِهِمْ وَأَغْرَقْنَاهُ  
فِرْعَوْنَ وَكُلَّ كَانُوا ظَالِمِينَ ○

55 For the worst of beasts  
In the sight of God <sup>1223</sup>  
Are those who reject Him  
They will not believe

٥٥- إِنَّ شَرَّ الدَّوَابِّ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ  
الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ○

56 They are those with whom  
Thou didst make a covenant, <sup>1-24</sup>  
But they break their covenant  
Every time, and they have not  
The fear (of God)

٥٦- الَّذِينَ عَاهَدْتَ مِنْهُمْ  
ثُمَّ يَنْقُضُونَ عَهْدَهُمْ  
فِي كُلِّ مَرْجَةٍ وَهُمْ لَا يَتَّقُونَ ○

57 If ye gain the mastery  
Over them in war,  
Disperse, with them, those  
Who follow them,  
That they may remember

٥٧- فَإِذَا تَشَفَعْتُمْ فِي الْحَرْبِ  
فَشَرِّدْ بِهِمْ مَنِ خَلْفَهُمْ  
لَعَلَّهُمْ يَذْكُرُونَ ○

58 If thou fearest treachery  
From any group, throw back  
(Their Covenant) to them, (so as  
To be) on equal terms  
For God loveth not the treacherous

٥٨- وَإِذَا تَخَافَنَّ مِنْ قَوْمٍ خِيَانَةً  
فَانْبِذْ إِلَيْهِمْ عَلَى سَوَاءٍ  
إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْخَائِضِينَ ○

#### SECTION 8

59 Let not the Unbelievers  
Think that they can  
Get the better (of the godly)  
They will never frustrate (them)

٥٩- وَلَا يَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا سَبَقُوا  
إِنَّهُمْ لَا يُجْرُونَ ○

1223 In viii 22 we were warned against 'the worst of beasts in the sight of God', who do not make use of their faculties of hearing, speaking and understanding in the service of God, and in fact misuse their faculties to blaspheme God. The same brute creatures are shown here in another light: they are faithless both to God and man.

1224 The immediate occasion was the repeated treachery of the Banu Quraiza after their treaties with the Muslims. But the general lesson remains, as noted in the two following verses. Treachery in war is doubly wrong, for it endangers so many lives. Such treachery should be punished in such a way that it gets no chance again. Not only the actual perpetrators but those who follow their standard should be rendered powerless. And the broken treaty should be denounced so that the innocent party can at least fight on equal terms. From actual physical warfare we can carry the same lesson to spiritual warfare. A truce or understanding is possible with those who respect definite principles, not with those who have no principles and are merely out for oppression and wickedness.

60 Against them make ready  
Your strength to the utmost  
Of your power, including <sup>1225</sup>  
Steeds of war, to strike terror  
Into (the hearts of) the enemies  
Of God and your enemies,  
And others besides, whom  
Ye may not know, but whom <sup>1226</sup>  
God doth know Whatever  
Ye shall spend in the Cause  
Of God, shall be repaid  
Unto you, and ye shall not  
Be treated unjustly <sup>1227</sup>

61 But if the enemy  
Incline towards peace,  
Do thou (also) incline  
Towards peace, and trust  
In God for He is the One  
That heareth and knoweth  
(All things) <sup>1228</sup>

62 Should they intend  
To deceive thee,—verily God  
Sufficeth thee He it is  
That hath strengthened thee  
With His aid and  
With (the company of)  
The Believers, <sup>1229</sup>

63 And (moreover) He hath put  
Affection between their hearts

٦٠- وَأَعِدُّوا لَهُمْ مِمَّا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ مِنْ قُوَّةٍ  
وَمِنْ رِبَاطِ الْخَيْلِ تُرْهِبُونَ بِهِ  
عَدُوَّ اللَّهِ وَعَدُوَّكُمْ  
وَالْآخَرِينَ مِنْ دُونِهِمْ  
لَا تَعْلَمُونَهُمُ اللَّهُ يَعْلَمُهُمْ  
وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ شَيْءٍ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ  
يُؤْتِكُمْ إِيَّاهُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تظْلُمُونَ ○

٦١- وَإِنْ جَاءُوا السَّلَامَ  
فَاجْنَحْ لَهَا  
وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ  
إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ○

٦٢- وَإِنْ يُرِيدُوا أَنْ يَخْدَعُوكَ  
فَإِنَّ حَسْبَكَ اللَّهُ  
هُوَ الَّذِي أَتَاكَ بِنَصْرِهِ  
وَبِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ ○

٦٣- وَالْفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِهِمْ

1225 The immediate occasion of this injunction was the weakness of cavalry and appointments of war in the early fights of Islam. But the general meaning follows. In every fight, physical, moral or spiritual, arm yourself with the best weapons and the best arms, trust your enemy so as to instil wholesome respect into him for you and the Cause you stand for.

1226 There are always lurking enemies whom you may not know but whom God knows. It is your duty to be ready against all for the sacred Cause under whose banner you are fighting.

1227 Be always ready and put all your resources into your Cause. You do not do so in vain. God's reward will come in various forms. He knows all and His reward will always be more generous than you can possibly deserve.

1228 While we must always be ready for the good fight lest it be forced on us, even in the midst of the fight we must always be ready for peace if there is any inclination towards peace on the other side. There is no merit merely in a fight by itself. It should be a joyful duty not for itself, but to establish the reign of peace and righteousness and God's Law.

1229 In working for peace there may be a certain risk of treachery on the other side. We must take that risk because the man of God has God's aid to count upon and the strength of the united body of the righteous.

Not if thou hadst spent  
All that is in the earth,  
Couldst thou have produced  
That affection, but God  
Hath done it for He  
Is Exalted, in might, Wise <sup>1230</sup>

لَوْ أَنْفَقْتَ مَا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا  
مَا أَلْفَتْ بِينَ قُلُوبِهِمْ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ  
أَلَفَ بَيْنَهُمْ إِنَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ٥

54 Oh Apostle ! Sufficient  
Unto thee is God,—  
Unto thee and unto those  
Who follow thee  
Among the Believers <sup>1231</sup>

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ حَسْبُكَ اللَّهُ  
وَمِنَ الْأَعْبَادِ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ٦

C 92 — No man of heart, spirit, or constancy  
viii 65 75) Can ever be cowed down by odds  
Against him We fight not for spoils  
Or for captives, but for the glory  
Of God, and for truth and faith  
We must be kind to all, but specially  
Regard the needs of our comrades,  
Linked to us by ties of duty and affection  
Our highest reward will be forgiveness  
And grace from the Giver of all

# SECTION 9

65 Oh Apostle ! rouse the Believers  
To the fight If there are  
Twenty amongst you, patient  
And persevering, they will  
Conquer two hundred if a hundred,  
They will conquer a thousand  
Of the Unbelievers for these  
Are a people without  
understanding <sup>1232</sup>

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ حَرِّضِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَى  
الْقِتَالِ إِنْ يَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ عِشْرُونَ  
صَابِرُونَ يَغْلِبُوا أَلْفًا ثَمِينًا وَإِنْ يَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ  
ثَلَاثَةٌ يَغْلِبُوا أَلْفًا مِنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا  
بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ ٧

1230 On the immediate occasion the greatest miracle and most wonderful working of God's grace was the union of hearts produced among the jarring warlike elements of Arabia under the gentle firm and wise guidance of Muhammad the Apostle of God At all times we must pray to God for this gift above all—union understanding and pure and sincere affection among those who take God's name With it there is strength and success Without it there is humiliation slavery and moral degradation There may be many causes of difference and dispute but the reconciliation can only come from the glory and wisdom of God

1231 The Believers mere lip profession of belief or even the kind of belief that does not result in action is not enough To those whose belief is so sincere that it results in complete trust in God and in fearless action in His service the consequences on this earth do not matter God's good pleasure is enough for them

1232 In a fight odds of ten to one against any one are appalling But they do not daunt the men of faith Whether they personally win or die their Cause conquers They are sure to win because (1) they have divine aid and (2) even humanly speaking those who take up arms against truth and righteousness are fools, and their seeming power is but a broken reed,

66 For the present, God  
Hath lightened your (task),  
For He knoweth that there is  
A weak spot in you <sup>1233</sup>  
But (even so), if there are  
A hundred of you, patient  
And persevering, they will  
Conquer two hundred, and if  
A thousand, they will conquer  
Two thousand, with the leave  
Of God for God is with those  
Who patiently persevere

٦٦- اَللّٰهُ خَفَّفَ اللّٰهُ عَنْكُمْ  
وَعَلِمَ اَنْ فِيْكُمْ ضَعْفًا  
وَ اِنْ يَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ رَّاٰةٌ صَابِرَةٌ  
يَّغْلِبُوا اِثْنَيْنِ وَاِنْ يَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ اَلْفٌ  
تَّغْلِبُوا اَلْفَيْنِ بِاِذْنِ اللّٰهِ  
وَاللّٰهُ مَعَ الصّٰبِرِيْنَ ٥

67 It is not fitting  
For an Apostle  
That he should have  
Prisoners of war until  
He hath slain great numbers <sup>1234</sup>  
In the land Ye look  
For the temporal goods  
Of this world, but God  
Looketh to the Hereafter  
And God is Exalted, in might, Wise

٦٧- مَا كَانَ لِنَبِيٍّ اَنْ يَكُوْنَ لَهُ اَسْرٰى  
حَتّٰى يُنْجِنَ فِي الْاَرْضِ  
لِيُرِيْدُوْنَ عَرَضَ الدُّنْيَا  
وَاللّٰهُ يُرِيْدُ الْاٰخِرَةَ  
وَاللّٰهُ عَزِيْزٌ حَكِيْمٌ ٥

68 Had it not been for  
A previous ordainment <sup>1235</sup>

٦٨- لَوْلَا كُنْتُمْ

1233 Given equal conditions Muslims on account of their faith could win against odds of ten to one But where their organisation and equipment are weak as was the case about the time of Badr, they were set a lighter task and asked to tackle no more than odds of two to one against them As a matter of fact at Badr they won through against odds of more than three to one

1234 An ordinary war may be for territory or trade revenge or military glory — all 'temporal goods of this world' Such a war is condemned But a Jihād is fought under strict conditions under a righteous Imām, purely for the defence of faith and God's Law All baser motives, therefore are strictly excluded The greed of gain in the shape of ransom from captives has no place in such warfare

At the same time if there has been heavy loss of life already, captives may be taken, and it would be for the Imām to exercise his discretion when it was safe to release them and whether the release should be free or on parole or on a fine by way of punishment Destruction and slaughter however repugnant to a gentle soul like that of Muḥammad were inevitable where evil tried to suppress the good Even Jesus, whose mission was more limited, had to say 'Think not that I am come to send peace on earth I came not to send peace but a sword (Matt x 34)

Seventy captives were taken at Badr and it was decided to take ransom for them While the general principle of fighting for the purpose of taking captives in order to get their ransom is condemned the particular action in this case was approved in vv 68 71

1235 Though any motive of worldly gain, which may have been in the minds of some among the victorious Muslim army, is condemned as worthy of a severe penalty, what actually happened is ascribed to the Plan of God, which was pre-ordained Among the prisoners taken were the Prophet's uncle Abbās and Ḥaḍhrat Alī's brother Aqīl who afterwards became Muslims Abbās was the founder of the celebrated Abbāsī Dynasty which played such a notable part in Islamic history In his case the promise made in v 70 was amply fulfilled In the case of all prisoners if there was any good in their hearts, their very fight against Islam and their capture led to their being blessed with Islam Thus does God's Plan work in a marvellous way, and evolve good out of seeming evil.

From God, a severe penalty  
Would have reached you  
For the (ransom) that ye took

- 69 But (now) enjoy<sup>1236</sup> what ye took  
In war, lawful and good  
But fear God for God  
Is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful

### SECTION 10

- 70 **O**h Apostle! say to those  
Who are captives in your hands  
"If God findeth any good<sup>1237</sup>  
In your hearts, He will  
Give you something better  
Than what has been taken  
From you, and He will  
Forgive you for God  
Is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful "

- 71 But if they have  
Treacherous designs against thee,  
(Oh Apostle!), they have already  
Been in treason against God,<sup>1238</sup>  
And so hath He given  
(Thee) power over them  
And God is He who hath  
(Full) knowledge and wisdom

- 72 **T**hose who believed,  
And adopted exile,

مِّنَ اللَّهِ سَبَقَ لَمَسَّكُمْ  
فِيمَا أَخَذْتُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ٥٩

٦٠- فَكُلُوا مِنَّمَا غَنِمْتُمْ حَلَالًا طَيِّبًا  
وَ اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ٦١

٤٠- يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ قُلْ لِّمَن فِي أَيْدِيكُمْ مِنَ  
الْأَسْرَى  
إِنَّ يَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ خَيْرًا  
مِّمَّا أَخَذْتُمْ مِنْكُمْ  
وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ٤١

٤٢- وَإِنْ يُرِيدُوا خِيَانَتَكَ  
فَقَدْ خَانُوا اللَّهَ مِنْ قَبْلُ  
فَأَمْكَنَ مِنْهُمْ  
وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ٤٣

٤٢- إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَهَاجَرُوا

1236 *Enjoy* literally *eat* See vii 19 n 1004 and v 69 n 776

1237 This is a consolation to the prisoners of war In spite of their previous hostility God will forgive them in His mercy if there was any good in their hearts and confer upon them a far higher gift than anything they have ever lost This gift in its highest sense would be the blessing of Islam, but even in a material sense there was great good fortune awaiting them *eg.*, in the case of Abbās (see n 1235)

Note how comprehensive is God's care He encourages and strengthens the Muslims, at the same time condemning any baser motives that may have entered their minds He consoles the prisoners of war and promises them better things if there is any good in them at all And He offers comfort to those who have left their homes in His Cause, and knits them into closer fellowship with those who have helped them and sympathised with them

1238 If the kindness shown to them is abused by the prisoners of war when they are released, it is not a matter for discouragement to those who showed the kindness Such persons have in their treachery shown already their treason to God in that they took up arms against God's Apostle, and sought to blot out the pure worship of God The punishment of defeat which opened the eyes of some of their comrades evidently did not open their eyes But God knows all and in His wisdom will order all things for the best The Believers have done their duty in showing such clemency as they could in the circumstances of war For them 'God sufficeth' (viii 62)

And fought for the Faith,  
 With their property  
 And their persons,  
 In the cause of God,  
 As well as those  
 Who gave (them) asylum<sup>1239</sup>  
 And aid,—these are (all)  
 Friends and protectors,  
 One of another  
 As to those who believed  
 But came not into exile,  
 Ye owe no duty  
 Of protection to them  
 Until they come into exile,<sup>1240</sup>  
 But if they seek  
 Your aid in religion  
 It is your duty  
 To help them,  
 Except against a people  
 With whom ye have  
 A treaty of mutual alliance<sup>1241</sup>  
 And (remember) God  
 Seeth all that ye do

- 73 The Unbelievers are  
 Protectors, one of another  
 Unless ye do this,  
 (Protect each other),  
 There would be  
 Tumult and oppression  
 On earth, and great mischief<sup>1242</sup>

وَجَاهِدُوا بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ  
 وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ  
 وَالَّذِينَ أَوْوَا وَنَصَرُوا  
 أُولَئِكَ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ  
 وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَلَمْ يُهَاجِرُوا  
 مَا لَكُمْ مِنْ وَلَايَتِهِمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ  
 حَتَّى يُهَاجِرُوا<sup>١</sup>  
 وَإِنْ اسْتَنْصَرُوكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ  
 فَعَلَيْكُمْ النَّصْرُ  
 إِلَّا عَلَى قَوْمٍ بَيْنَكُمْ  
 وَبَيْنَهُم مِّيثَاقٌ<sup>٢</sup>  
 وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ<sup>٣</sup>

٣- وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ  
 بَعْضٍ إِلَّا تَفْعَلُوهُ  
 تَكُنْ فِتْنَةٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ  
 وَمَسَادٌ كَثِيرٌ

1239 The reference is to the *Muhājirīn* and the *Anṣār* the Emigrants and the Helpers the people who forsook their homes and adopted voluntary exile from Mecca in company with their beloved Leader, and their good friends in Medina who gave them asylum and every kind of assistance moral and material. Under the magnetic personality of the Holy Apostle these two groups became like blood brothers and they were so treated in matters of inheritance during the period when they were cut off from their kith and kin.

1240 The Believers (Muslims) were entitled to all assistance in matters of religion. But if they were not strong enough to suffer voluntary exile on behalf of the Cause and make the personal sacrifices which their more ardent brethren in faith made, they could not reasonably ask for political or military assistance or protection.

1241 If a community suffers voluntary exile on account of persecution and oppression and some of its weaker brethren stay behind holding fast to faith but not prepared for the higher sacrifice, the exiles have still a duty to help their weaker brethren in matters of religion. The exiles being at open war against the State which oppressed them would be free to fight against such State. But if the weaker brethren are in a State in mutual alliance with the Community, the Community cannot in honour interfere with that State whether it is Muslim or not. Presumably the alliance implies that the grievances of the weaker brethren will be redressed by the State itself. But it is not honourable to embarrass your own ally.

1242 Evil consorts with evil. The good have all the more reason for drawing together and not only living in mutual harmony but being ready at all times to protect each other. Otherwise the world will be given over to aggressions by unscrupulous people and the good will fail in their duty to establish God's Peace and to strengthen all the forces of truth and righteousness.

74 Those who believe,  
And adopt exile,  
And fight for the Faith,  
In the cause of God,  
As well as those  
Who give (them) asylum  
And aid,—these are (all)  
In very truth the Believers  
For them is the forgiveness  
Of sins and a provision  
Most generous <sup>1243</sup>

75 And those who  
Accept Faith subsequently, <sup>1244</sup>  
And adopt exile,  
And fight for the Faith  
In your company,—  
They are of you  
But kindred by blood  
Have prior rights  
Against each other  
In the Book of God <sup>245</sup>  
Verily God is well acquainted  
With all things

۴- وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَهَاجَرُوا  
وَجَاهَدُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ  
وَالَّذِينَ أَوْوُوا وَنَصَرُوا  
أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ حَقًّا  
لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ  
وَرِزْقٌ كَرِيمٌ ۝

۵- وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْ بَعْدُ وَهَاجَرُوا  
وَجَاهَدُوا مَعَكُمْ  
فَأُولَٰئِكَ مِنْكُمْ وَأُولُوا الْأَرْحَامِ  
بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلَىٰ بِبَعْضٍ  
فِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ  
إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ۝



1243 Believers who make all sacrifices in the cause of God have given the best possible proof of their Faith by their actions. They have loved God much and much will be forgiven them. What they sacrificed was perhaps judged by universal standards of small value but its value will be estimated by the precious love behind it and its reward will be of no ordinary kind. It will not be a reward in the ordinary sense at all for a reward is given once for all. It will be a provision which lasts for ever and is on the most generous scale.

1244 Those who come into the fold last are none the less brethren in the fullest acceptance of the term. But any special provisions made in the special circumstances of the first martyrs for the Cause will not of course apply to them as the special circumstances which made them necessary have ceased to exist. See next note.

1245 *The Book of God* i.e. the Universal Plan, the Eternal Decree, the Preserved Tablet (lxxxv 22). Blood relationship and its rights and duties do not depend on special circumstances of a temporary nature. Any temporary rights of mutual inheritance established between the early Emigrants and Helpers (n 1239) would not apply to later recruits, who would come under entirely different circumstances.



## INTRODUCTION TO SŪRA IX

*Tauba* (Repentance) or *Baraat* (Immunity)

Logically this Sūra follows up the argument of the last Sūra (VIII), and indeed may be considered a part of it, although chronologically the two are separated by an interval of seven years

We saw that Sūra VIII dealt with the large questions arising at the outset of the life of a new Ummat or organised nation—questions of defence under attack, distribution of war acquisitions after victory, the virtues needed for concerted action, and clemency and consideration for one's own and for enemies in the hour of victory. We pass on in this Sūra to deal with the question—what is to be done if the enemy breaks faith and is guilty of treachery? No nation can go on with a treaty if the other party violates it at will, but it is laid down that a period of four months should be allowed by way of notice after denunciation of the treaty, that due protection should be accorded in the intervening period, that there should always be open the door to repentance and reunion with the people of God, and that if all these fail, and war must be undertaken, it must be pushed with the utmost vigour

These are the general principles deducible from the Sūra. The immediate occasion for their promulgation may be considered in connection with the chronological place of the Sūra

Chronologically, verses 1—29 were a notable declaration of State policy promulgated about the month of Shawwāl, A H 9, and read out by Hadhrat 'Alī at the Pilgrimage two months later in order to give the policy the widest publicity possible. The remainder of the Sūra, verses 30—129, was revealed a little earlier, say about the month of Ramadhān, A H 9, and sums up the lessons of the Apostle's Tabūk expedition in the late summer of A H 9 (say October 630)

Tabūk is a place near the frontier of Arabia, quite close to what was then Byzantine territory in the Province of Syria (which includes Palestine). It is on the Hījāz Railway, about 350 miles north west of Medina, and 150 miles south of Ma'ān. It had a fort and a spring of water. In consequence of strong and persistent rumours that the Byzantines (Romans) were preparing to invade Arabia and that the Byzantine Emperor himself had arrived near the frontier for the purpose, the Apostle collected as large a force as he could, and marched to Tabūk. The Byzantine invasion did not come off. But the Apostle took the opportunity of consolidating the Muslim position in that direction and making treaties of alliance with certain Christian and Jewish tribes near the Gulf of 'Aqaba. On his return to Medina he considered the situation. During his absence the Hypocrites had played, as always, a double game, and the policy hitherto followed, of free access to the sacred centre of Islam, to Muslims and Pagans alike, was now altered, as it had been abused by the enemies of Islam.

This is the only Sūra to which the usual formula of *Bismillah* is not prefixed. It was among the last of the Sūras revealed, and though the Apostle had directed that it should follow Sūra VIII, it was not clear whether it was to form a separate Sūra or only a part of Sūra VIII. It is now treated as a separate Sūra, but the *Bismillah* is not prefixed to it, as there is no warrant for supposing that the Apostle used the *Bismillah* before it in his recitation of the Qurān. The Sūra is known under many

names the two most commonly used are (1) *Taubā* (Repentance), with reference to ix 104 and (2) *Barāat* (Immunity), the opening word of the Sūra

**Summary** —Treaties with those Pagans who have treacherously broken their terms are denounced, but four months' time is given for adjustments or repentance Pagans to be excluded from the sacred Mosques Infidelity to be fought (ix 1—29 and C 93)

The People of the Book have obscured the light of God, but the Truth of God must prevail over all We must be ready to fight for the Faith that is in us, otherwise we shall be unworthy to uphold God's banner, and He will raise other people in our place (ix 30—42 and C 94)

The Hypocrites and their double dealing their evil ways pointed out. Their punishment will be as sure as the blessings of the righteous (ix 43—72, and C 95)

All evil should be resisted, unless there is repentance falsehood is not content with breach of faith but mocks all good it should not be envied but shunned (ix 73—99 and C 96)

The good pleasure of God is with those who are sincere and make sacrifices in His cause, He will forgive those who do wrong and repent, but not those who intend mischief and foment unbelief and disunion among believers The believers by their self surrender obtain eternal Felicity God will turn in mercy even to those who, though they waver or fail in duty, turn at last to Him (ix 100-118, and C 97)

Those who believe should associate with the righteous and the truthful, actively doing their duty But if the Community marches out, a part of them should remain behind for the purpose of diligently studying religion and teaching their brethren when they return Every Sūra increases the faith of those who believe, though those diseased in heart may add doubt to doubt Trust in God, Lord of the Throne of Glory (ix 119—129, and C 98)

C 93 —If the Pagans repeatedly break  
(ix 1—29) Their treaties, denounce the treaties,  
But give them time either to repent  
Or to prepare for the just punishment  
Of their treachery Punish the chiefs  
Of the treacherous, and destroy them  
But if one of them seek asylum,  
Give it let him hear the Word  
Of God and escort him to security  
Be true to the true, but fight those  
Who are false to plighted word  
And taunt you for your Faith  
No one has the right to approach  
The mosques of God unless  
He believes in God and follows  
God's Law, the law of righteousness,

## Sūra IX

*Tauba* (repentance) or *Barāat*  
(Immunity).



1 **إِن** (declaration) of immunity <sup>1246</sup>

From God and His Apostle,  
To those of the Pagans  
With whom ye have contracted  
Mutual alliances —

١- بَرَاءَةٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ  
إِلَى الَّذِينَ عَاهَدْتُمْ  
مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ۝

2 Go ye, then, for four months,<sup>1247</sup>  
Backwards and forwards,  
(As ye will), throughout the land,  
But know ye that ye cannot  
Frustrate God (by your falsehood)  
But that God will cover  
With shame those who reject Him

٢- فَسَيَحْضُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ أَرْبَعَةَ أَشْهُرٍ  
وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّكُمْ غَيْرُ مُعْجِزِي اللَّهِ  
وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يُخْزِي الْكَافِرِينَ ۝

3 And an Announcement from God  
And His Apostle, to the people  
(Assembled) on the day  
Of the Great Pilgrimage,—<sup>1248</sup>  
That God and His Apostle  
Dissolve (treaty) obligations  
With the Pagans  
If, then, ye repent,  
It were best for you ,  
But if ye turn away,

٣- وَأَذَانٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ إِلَى النَّاسِ  
يَوْمَ الْحَجِّ الْأَكْبَرِ  
إِنَّ اللَّهَ بَرِئٌ مِّنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ذَٰلِكَ  
رَسُولُهُ ۚ فَإِنْ تُبْتُمْ  
فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ وَإِنْ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ

<sup>1246</sup> *Barāat* usually translated immunity. I do not think that word correctly represents the Arabic word in this context. I retain it as I cannot think of any single English word as an equivalent. The general sense is explained in the introduction to this Sūra. In verse 3 below I use the periphrasis 'dissolve treaty obligations' which goes some way to explain the meaning. The Pagans and enemies of Islam frequently made treaties of mutual alliance with the Muslims. The Muslims scrupulously observed their part but the Pagans violated their part again and again when it suited them. After some years experience it became imperative to denounce such treaties altogether. This was done in due form with four months notice and a chance was given to those who faithfully observed their pledges to continue their alliance.

<sup>1247</sup> *Four months*. Some Commentators understand by this the four forbidden months in which warfare by ancient Arabian custom was unlawful, viz Rajab, Zul qa d, Zul hajj and Muharram. See II 194 n. But it is better to take the signification of the four months immediately following the Declaration. Assuming that the Sūra was promulgated early in Shawwāl (see Introduction) the four months would be Shawwāl, Zul qa d, Zul hajj and Muharram of which the last three would also be the customary Prohibited Months.

<sup>1248</sup> The great day of Hajj is either the 9th of Zul hajj (*Arafa*), or the 10th (the Day of Sacrifice).

Know ye that ye cannot  
Frustrate God And proclaim  
A grievous penalty to those  
Who reject Faith

فَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّكُمْ غَيْرُ مُفْعِزِي اللَّهِ  
وَبَشِّرِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِعَذَابِ الْبَهِيمِ

† (But the treaties are) not dissolved <sup>1249</sup>  
With those Pagans with whom  
Ye have entered into alliance  
And who have not subsequently  
Failed you in aught,  
Nor aided any one against you  
So fulfil your engagements  
With them to the end  
Of their term for God  
Loveth the righteous

۴- إِلَّا الَّذِينَ عَاهَدْتُمْ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ  
ثُمَّ لَمْ يَنْقُصُوكُمْ شَيْئًا  
وَلَمْ يُظَاهِرُوا عَلَيْكُمْ أَحَدًا  
فَاتِمُوا إِلَيْهِمْ عَهْدَهُمْ إِلَىٰ مُدَّتِهِمْ  
إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَّقِينَ ○

‡ But when the forbidden  
months <sup>1250</sup>  
Are past, then fight and slay <sup>1251</sup>  
The Pagans wherever ye find them,  
Or seize them, beleaguer them,  
And lie in wait for them  
In every stratagem (of war),  
But if they repent, <sup>1252</sup>  
And establish regular prayers  
And practise regular charity,  
Then open the way for them  
For God is Oft-Forgiving,  
Most Merciful

۵- فَإِذَا انسَلَخَ الْأَشْهُرُ الْحُرُمُ  
فَاقْتُلُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ حَيْثُ وَجَدْتُمُوهُمْ  
وَخُذُوا هُمْ وَأَحْصُرُوهُمْ  
وَاقْعُدُوا لَهُمْ كُلَّ مَرْصِدٍ  
وَإِنْ نَابُوا وَآكَمُوا الصَّلَاةَ  
وَآتَوْا الزَّكَاةَ فَخَلُّوا سَبِيلَهُمْ  
إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ○

1249 The sacred duty of fulfilling all obligations of every kind to Muslims and non Muslims, in public as well as private life is a cardinal feature of Muslim ethics. The question what is to be done with those who abuse this principle by failing in their duty but expect the Muslims to do their part is not to be solved (in the case of treaties) by a general denunciation of treaties but by a careful consideration of the cases where there has been fidelity and not treachery. There we are enjoined to give the strictest fidelity as it is a part of righteousness and our duty to God.

1250 The emphasis is on the first clause—it is only when the four months of grace are past, and the other party show no signs of desisting from their treacherous designs by right conduct that the state of war supervenes—between Faith and Unfaith.

1251 When war becomes inevitable it must be prosecuted with vigour. According to the English phrase you cannot fight with kid gloves. The fighting may take the form of slaughter or capture, or siege or ambush and other stratagems. But even then there is room for repentance and amendment on the part of the guilty party, and if that takes place our duty is forgiveness and the establishment of peace.

1252 The repentance must be sincere and that is shown by conduct—a religious spirit of true prayer and charity. In that case we are not to bar the gate against the repentant. On the contrary we must do all we can to make their way easy, remembering that God is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

- 6 If one amongst the Pagans <sup>1253</sup>  
 Ask thee for asylum,  
 Grant it to him,  
 So that he may hear the Word  
 Of God, and then escort him  
 To where he can be secure <sup>1254</sup>  
 That is because they are  
 Men without knowledge

## SECTION 2

- 7 ~~How~~ Now can there be a league,  
 Before God and His Apostle,  
 With the Pagans, except those <sup>1255</sup>  
 With whom ye made a treaty  
 Near the Sacred Mosque?  
 As long as these stand true  
 To you, stand ye true to them  
 For God doth love the righteous
- 8 How (can there be such a league), <sup>1256</sup>  
 Seeing that if they get an advantage  
 Over you, they respect not  
 In you the ties either of kinship <sup>1257</sup>

وَأَنْ أَسَدًا مِّنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ اسْتَجَارَكَ  
 فَأَجْرُهُ حَتَّى يَسْمَعَ كَلِمَ اللَّهِ  
 ثُمَّ أَبْلِغَهُ مَأْمَنَهُ  
 ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ٥

كَيْفَ يَكُونُ لِلْمُشْرِكِينَ عَهْدٌ عِندَ  
 اللَّهِ وَعِنْدَ رَسُولِهِ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ عَاهَدْتُمْ  
 عِندَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ فَمَا اسْتَقَامُوا لَكُمْ  
 فَاسْتَقِيمُوا لَهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَّقِينَ

كَيْفَ وَإِنْ يَظْهَرُوا عَلَيْكُمْ  
 لَا يَرْقُبُوا فِيكُمْ إِلَّا

1253 Even among the enemies of Islam actively fighting against Islam there may be individuals who may be in a position to require protection Full asylum is to be given to them and opportunities provided for hearing the Word of God If they accept the Word they become Muslims and brethren and no further question arises If they do not see their way to accept Islam they will require double protection (1) from the Islamic forces openly fighting against their people and (2) from their own people as they detached themselves from them Both kinds of protection should be ensured for them and they should be safely escorted to a place where they can be safe Such persons only err through ignorance, and there may be much good in them

1254 *Maaman* place or opportunity of being secure from all harm

1255 In this section we have the reasons why the treaties with treacherous Pagan foes were denounced The clause introducing the exception is a parenthetical clause The word 'Pagans' must be connected with verse 8 which follows In that verse the word *katfa* resumes the clause introduced by the word *katfa* at the beginning of verse 7 The exceptional Pagan tribes which remained true to their word were the Banū Hamza and the Banū Kināna who swore their treaty near the Sacred Mosque and faithfully observed it They were to be given the full benefit of their fidelity even though their kindred tribes were treacherous

1256 The exceptions having been stated parenthetically in verse 7, the indictment of the general mass of Pagan tribes is now set out briefly but fully and convincingly After that kind of behaviour how can any treaty be possible with them? The counts are (1) that whenever they got a slight advantage, they disregarded the ties both of kinship and of covenant as against the Muslims because of their Faith, thus proving doubly treacherous, (2) that they spoke fair words but had venom in their hearts (3) that their attitude was one of rebellion against their plighted word, (4) that they disregarded the solemn Signs of God for some miserable worldly gain, (5) that they tried to prevent other people from coming to the Way of God The first clause is repeated again as the last clause, to emphasize their double treachery and round off the argument

1257 Among the Arabs the ties of kinship were so strong as to be almost unbreakable The Pagan Arabs went out of their way to break them in the case of the Muslims, who were kith and kin to them Besides the bond of kinship there was the further bond of their plighted oath in the Treaty They broke that oath because the other parties were Muslims!

Or of covenant ? With (fair words  
From) their mouths they entice you,  
But their hearts are averse  
From you, and most of them  
Are rebellious and wicked

The Signs of God have they sold  
For a miserable price,  
And (many) have they hindered  
From His Way evil indeed  
Are the deeds they have done

0 In a Believer they respect not  
The ties either of kinship  
Or of covenant ! It is they  
Who have transgressed all  
bounds <sup>1258</sup>

1 **B**ut (even so), if they repent, <sup>1259</sup>  
Establish regular prayers,  
And practise regular charity,—  
They are your brethren in Faith  
Thus do We explain the Signs  
In detail, for those who understand

2 But if they violate their oaths  
After their covenant,  
And taunt you for your  
Faith,—<sup>1260</sup>  
Fight ye the chiefs of Unfaith  
For their oaths are nothing to  
them  
That thus they may be restrained

13 **W**ill ye not fight people  
Who violated their oaths,

وَلَا ذِمَّةٌ يُبْذَرُكُمْ بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ  
وَتَأْبَى قُلُوبُهُمْ  
وَأَكْثَرُهُمْ فَاسِقُونَ ۝

۹-اِشْتَرَوْا بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا  
فَصَدُّوا عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ  
إِنَّهُمْ سَاءَ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ۝

۱۰-لَا يَرْقُبُونَ فِي مُؤْمِنٍ إِلَّا  
وَلَا ذِمَّةً ۝  
وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُعْتَدُونَ ۝

۱۱-فَإِنْ تَابُوا وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ  
وَاتَّوْا الزَّكَاةَ فَإِخْوَانُكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ  
وَنُفِصِلُ الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ ۝

۱۲-وَلِنْ تَكْفُرُوا أَيْمَانَهُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ عَهْدِهِمْ  
وَطَعَنُوا فِي دِينِكُمْ  
فَقَاتِلُوا أِتْنَةَ الْكَفْرِ  
إِنَّهُمْ لَا أَيْمَانَ لَهُمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَنْتَهُونَ ۝

۱۳-أَلَا تُقَاتِلُونَ قَوْمًا نَكَثُوا أَيْمَانَهُمْ

1258 The catalogue of their sins being set out it is clear that they were aggressors in the worst possible ways and war became inevitable

1259 The chance of repentance and mercy to the worst enemies is again emphasised in order that people with any understanding may not be misled into thinking that war was an easy or light matter This emphasis is balanced by the emphasis in the next verse on the causes which made war inevitable for those with any self respect

1260 Not only did the enemies break their oaths shamelessly, but they even taunted the Muslims on their Faith and the ' simple minded way in which they continued to respect their part of the treaty, as if they were afraid to fight !

وَهُتَوَا بِأَخْرَاجِ الرُّسُولِ وَهُمْ بَدُّوْكُمْ  
أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ أَتَخْشَوْنَهُمْ  
فَاللَّهُ أَحَقُّ أَنْ تَخْشَوْهُ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ

- ۱۴- قَاتِلُوهُمْ يُعَذِّبُهُمُ اللَّهُ بِأَيْدِيكُمْ  
وَيُخْرِجُهُمْ وَيَنْصُرْكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ  
وَيَشْفِ صُدُورَ قَوْمٍ مُّؤْمِنِينَ ۝

- ١٥- وَيُذْهِبْ غَيْظَ قُلُوبِهِمْ  
وَيَتُوبَ اللَّهُ عَلَى مَنْ يَشَاءُ  
وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ○

- ١٦- أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَنْ تُتْرَكُوا  
وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَكُمْ حَافِظٌ فَهُوَ  
يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ  
وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَكُمْ شَافِعٌ فَهُوَ  
يَرَىٰ مَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ۚ

1265 Some translators have taken a different verbal construction of this passage but the ultimate effect in meaning is the same we must all be tested and tried, but God knows our inmost hearts, and He will support those who strive in His way out of sincere love for Him, His Apostle, and the body of the true men of faith,

## SECTION 3

- 17 It is not for such  
As join gods with God,  
To visit or maintain <sup>1266</sup>  
The mosques of God  
While they witness  
Against their own souls  
To infidelity The works  
Of such bear no fruit  
In Fire shall they dwell

- 18 The mosques of God  
Shall be visited and maintained  
By such as believe in God  
And the Last Day, establish  
Regular prayers, and practise  
Regular charity, and fear  
None (at all) except God <sup>1267</sup>  
It is they who are expected  
To be on true guidance <sup>1268</sup>

- 19 Do ye make the giving <sup>1269</sup>  
Of drink to pilgrims,

١٧- مَا كَانَ لِلشَّارِكِينَ  
أَنْ يَعْبُرُوا مَسْجِدَ اللَّهِ  
شَاهِدِينَ عَلَى أَنْفُسِهِمْ بِالْكُفْرِ  
أُولَئِكَ حَبِطَتْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ  
وَفِي النَّارِ هُمْ خَالِدُونَ ○

١٨- إِنَّمَا يَعْبُرُ مَسْجِدَ اللَّهِ  
مَنْ أَمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ  
وَأَقَامَ الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَى الزَّكَاةَ  
وَلَمْ يَخْشَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ فَعَسَىٰ أُولَئِكَ  
أَنْ يَكُونُوا مِنَ الْمُهْتَدِينَ ○

١٩- أَجَعَلْتُمْ سِقَايَةَ الْحَاجِّ

1266 *Amara* as applied to mosques implies the following ideas (1) to build or repair, (2) to maintain in fitting dignity (3) to visit for purposes of devotion and (4) fill with light and life and activity—what would be called in Urdu *Masjid ābād karnā* For brevity I have only used the two words visit and maintain in the Translation

Before the preaching of Islam the Pagans built, repaired, and maintained the Mosque, and celebrated Pagan ceremonies in it including naked dances round the Ka ba They made an income out of it Islam protested and the Pagans ejected Muslims and their Leader from Mecca and shut them out from the Ka ba itself When the Muslims were strong enough to re take Mecca (A H 8) they purified the Mosque and re established the worship of the true God The families who previously held control could not after this be allowed in a state of Paganism to control the Mosque any longer If they became Muslims it was a different matter The further question arose should they be allowed to visit it and practise their unseemly Pagan rites? Obviously this would be derogatory to the dignity and honour of the Mosque and was forbidden This was the particular occasion to which the verse refers The general deduction is clear A house of God is a place of sincere devotion not a theatre for vulgar rites nor a source of worldly income Only sincere Believers have a right of entry Who the sincere Believers are is explained in the next verse

1267 See the previous note Sincere Believers are those who have faith in God and the future and have a spirit of devotion and charity—a true and abiding spirit not merely isolated acts now and again Moreover they must not bow to worldly greed or ambition which produces fear of worldly power

1268 Others may call themselves by what names they like True guidance is shown by the tests here indicated

1269 Giving drinks of cold water to thirsty pilgrims and doing material services to a mosque are meritorious acts but they are only external If they do not touch the soul, their value is slight Far greater in the sight of God, are Faith Endeavour and self surrender to God It is these that will obtain honour in the sight of God God's light and guidance comes to them, and not to those self-sufficient beings who think that a little show of what the world considers piety is enough.



Or the maintenance of  
The Sacred Mosque, equal  
To (the pious service of) those  
Who believe in God  
And the Last Day, and strive  
With might and main  
In the cause of God ?  
They are not comparable  
In the sight of God  
And God guides not  
Those who do wrong

- 20 Those who believe, and suffer  
Exile and strive with might  
And main, in God's cause,<sup>1270</sup>  
With their goods and their persons,  
Have the highest rank  
In the sight of God  
They are the people  
Who will achieve (salvation)

21. Their Lord doth give them  
Glad tidings of a Mercy  
From Himself, of His good  
pleasure,  
And of Gardens for them,  
Wherein are delights  
That endure

- 22 They will dwell therein  
For ever Verily in God's Presence  
Is a reward, the greatest (of all)<sup>1271</sup>

- 23 **O** ye who believe ! Take not  
For protectors your fathers  
And your brothers if they love  
Infidelity above Faith

وَعِمَارَةَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ كَمَنْ أَمَنَ  
بِاللَّهِ

وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَجَاهِدْ

فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ

لَا يَسْتَوُونَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ

وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ ٢٠

٢٠- الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَهَاجَرُوا وَجَاهَدُوا فِي

سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ ۖ

أَعْظَمُ دَرَجَةً عِنْدَ اللَّهِ

وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْفَائِزُونَ ٢١

٢١- يُبَشِّرُهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ بِرَحْمَةٍ مِنْهُ

وَرِضْوَانٍ

وَجَنَّاتٍ لَهُمْ

فِيهَا نَعِيمٌ مُّقِيمٌ ٢٢

٢٢- خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا

إِنَّ اللَّهَ عِنْدَهُ أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ ٢٣

٢٣- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا آبَاءَكُمْ

وَأَخْوَانَكُمْ أَوْلِيَاءَ إِنِ اسْتَحَبُّوا الْكُفْرَ عَلَى

1270 Here is a good description of *Jihād* It may require fighting in God's cause as a form of self sacrifice But its essence consists in (1) a true and sincere Faith which so fixes its gaze on God, that all selfish or worldly motives seem paltry and fade away, and (2) an earnest and ceaseless activity, involving the sacrifice (if need be) of life, person, or property in the service of God Mere brutal fighting is opposed to the whole spirit of *Jihād* while the sincere scholar's pen or preacher's voice or wealthy man's contributions may be the most valuable forms of *Jihād*

1271 Those who strive and suffer in God's cause are promised (1) a mercy specially from Himself, (2) His own good pleasure, (3) gardens of perpetual delight, (4) the supreme reward, God's own Presence or nearness These are in gradation (1) is a special mercy, higher than flows out to all creatures, (2) is a consciousness of God's good pleasure which raises the soul above itself, (3) is that state of permanent spiritual assurance which is typified by gardens of perpetual delight and (4) is the final bliss which is the Presence of God Himself, or, in *Ṣūfī* language *didār* : *Ilāhī*, the sight of God Himself

If any of you do so,  
They do wrong

- 24 Say If it be that your fathers,  
Your sons, your brothers,  
Your mates, or your kindred,  
The wealth that ye have gained,  
The commerce in which ye fear  
A decline, or the dwellings  
In which ye delight—<sup>1272</sup>  
Are dearer to you than God,  
Or His Apostle, or the striving  
In His cause, —then wait  
Until God brings about <sup>1273</sup>  
His Decision and God  
Guides not the rebellious

#### SECTION 4

- 25 **A**ssuredly God did help you  
In many battle-fields  
And on the day of Hunain <sup>1274</sup>  
Behold! your great numbers  
Elated you, but they availed  
You naught the land,  
For all that it is wide,  
Did constrain you, and ye

الْإِيمَانُ وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّهُمْ فَوَلَّيْكُمْ  
هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ  
٢٣ قُلْ إِنْ كَانَ آبَاؤُكُمْ وَأَبْنَاؤُكُمْ وَ  
إِخْوَانُكُمْ وَأَزْوَاجُكُمْ وَعَشِيرَتُكُمْ  
وَأَمْوَالٌ اقْتَرَفْتُمُوهَا وَتِجَارَةٌ تَخْشَوْنَ  
كَسَادَهَا وَمَسْكِنٌ تَرْضَوْنَ أَحَبُّ إِلَيْكُمْ  
مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَجِهَادٍ فِي سَبِيلِهِ  
فَتَرْصُدُوا حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ اللَّهُ بِأَمْرِهِ  
وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْفَاسِقِينَ ٤

٢٥ لَقَدْ نَصَرَكُمُ اللَّهُ فِي مَوَاطِنَ كَثِيرَةٍ  
وَيَوْمَ حُنَيْنٍ إِذْ أَعْجَبَتْكُمْ كَثْرَتُكُمْ  
فَلَمْ تَغْنِ عَنْكُمْ شَيْئًا  
وَضَاقَتْ عَلَيْكُمُ الْأَرْضُ بِمَا رَحُبَتْ

1272 Man's heart clings to (1) his own kith and kin—parents children brothers and sisters, husbands or wives, or other relatives (2) wealth and prosperity (3) commerce or means of profit and gain, or (4) noble buildings for dignity or comfort If these are a hindrance in God's cause, we have to choose which we love most We must love God even if it involves the sacrifice of all else

1273 If we love our earthly ties and comforts, profits and pleasures more than we love God, and therefore fail to respond to God's cause, it is not God's cause which will suffer God's purpose will be accomplished with or without us But our failure to respond to His will must leave us spiritually poorer bereft of grace and guidance for God guides not the rebellious

This is of universal application But it was strikingly illustrated in the case of those faithful ones who obeyed the Apostle's call left the comfort of their homes in Mecca and suffered exile in Medina gave up their trade and their possessions, strove and fought for God's cause, sometimes against their own kith and kin or their own tribesmen who were enemies of Islam They won through Others were not prepared for such sacrifice but their failure did not stop the accomplishment of God's plan and purpose

1274 Hunain on the road to Taif from Mecca and about fourteen miles to the east of Mecca It is a valley in the mountainous country between Mecca and Taif Immediately after the conquest of Mecca (A H 8) the Pagan idolaters who were surprised and chagrined at the wonderful reception which Islam was receiving, organised a great gathering near Taif to concert plans for attacking the Apostle The Hawazin and the Thaqif tribes took the lead and prepared a great expedition for Mecca, boasting of their strength and military skill There was on the other hand a wave of confident enthusiasm among the Muslims at Mecca in which the new Muslims joined The enemy forces numbered about 4,000 but the Muslim force reached a total of ten or twelve thousand, as every one wished to join The battle was joined at Hunain, as described in the next note.

Turned back in retreat <sup>1275</sup>

- 26 But God did pour His calm <sup>1276</sup>  
On the Apostle and on the  
Believers,  
And sent down forces which ye  
Saw not He punished  
The Unbelievers thus doth He  
Reward those without Faith

- 27 Again will God, after this, <sup>1277</sup>  
Turn (in mercy) to whom  
He will for God  
Is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful

- 28 **Q**h ye who believe! Truly  
The Pagans are unclean, <sup>1278</sup>  
So let them not,  
After this year of theirs, <sup>1279</sup>

ثُمَّ وَلَّيْتُمْ مُدْبِرِينَ ۝

٢٦- ثُمَّ أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ سَكِينَتَهُ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ  
وَعَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَأَنْزَلَ جُنُودًا لَمْ  
تَرَوْهَا وَعَذَّبَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا  
وَذَلِكَ جَزَاءُ الْكَافِرِينَ ۝

٢٧- ثُمَّ يَتُوبُ اللَّهُ مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ عَلَى  
مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ۝

٢٨- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّمَا الْمُشْرِكُونَ  
نَجَسٌ فَلَا يَقْرَبُوا

1275 For the first time the Muslims had at Hunain tremendous odds in their favour. But this itself constituted a danger. Many in their ranks had more enthusiasm than wisdom, more a spirit of elation than of faith and confidence in the righteousness of their cause. The enemy had the advantage of knowing the ground thoroughly. They laid an ambush in which the advance guard of the Muslim forces was caught. The country is hilly in which the enemy concealed himself. As soon as the Muslim vanguard entered the Hunain valley the enemy fell upon them with fury and caused havoc with their arrows from their places of concealment. In such ground the numbers of the Muslims were themselves a disadvantage. Many were slain and many turned back in confusion and retreat. But the Apostle as ever was calm in his wisdom and faith. He rallied his forces and inflicted the most crushing defeat on the enemy.

1276 *Sakīn* calm, peace, security, tranquillity. Cf. ii 248. The Apostle never approved of over-weening confidence or reliance merely upon human strength or human resources or numbers. In the hour of danger and seeming disaster he was perfectly calm and with cool courage relied upon the help of God. Whose standard he carried. His calmness inspired all around him and stopped the rout of those who had turned their backs. It was with God's help that they won and their victory was complete. They followed it up with an energetic pursuit of the enemies, capturing their camps, their flocks and herds and their families whom they had boastfully brought with them in expectation of an easy victory.

1277 Examples of God's mercy and grace in difficult circumstances in one case illustrate His grace and mercy at all times to those who have faith.

1278 *Unclean* both literally and metaphorically, because Muslims are enjoined to be strict in ablutions and physical cleanliness, as well as in purity of mind and heart, so that their word can be relied upon.

1279 *This year of theirs* there is a two-fold meaning: (1) now that you have complete control of Mecca and are charged with the purity of worship there, shut out all impurity from this year; (2) you have seen how the Pagans have behaved this year, their year of power and misuse of that power may be called *their year*, it is over, and now you Muslims are responsible.

Approach the Sacred Mosque  
And if ye fear poverty,<sup>1280</sup>  
Soon will God enrich you,  
If He wills, out of His bounty,  
For God is All-Knowing, All-Wise

السَّيِّدَ الْحَرَامَ بَعْدَ عَامِهِمْ هَذَا وَإِنْ  
خِفْتُمْ عَيْلَةً فَسَوْفَ يُغْنِيَكُمْ اللَّهُ مِنْ  
فَضْلِهِ إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ حَكِيمٌ ٥

- 29 Fight those who believe not  
In God nor the Last Day,  
Nor hold that forbidden  
Which hath been forbidden  
By God and His Apostle,  
Nor acknowledge the Religion  
Of Truth, (even if they are)  
Of the People of the Book,  
Until they pay the *Jizya*<sup>1281</sup>  
With willing submission,<sup>1282</sup>  
And feel themselves subdued

۲۹- قَاتِلُوا الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَلَا  
بِالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَلَا يُحَرِّمُونَ مَا حَرَّمَ  
اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَلَا يَدِينُونَ دِينَ الْحَقِّ  
مِنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ  
حَتَّى يُعْطُوا الْجِزْيَةَ عَنْ يَدٍ  
وَهُمْ صَاغِرُونَ ۝

- C 94 —The enemies of Faith would fain put out  
(ix 30 42) God's light, but God's light will shine  
More glorious than ever Wealth  
Is for use and on trust for mankind  
Hoard not, nor misuse it Fight  
A straight fight in the cause of Right  
Go forth bravely to strive and struggle,  
And prove yourselves worthy of God

1280 The concourse in Mecca added to the profits of trade and commerce But fear not we are told, 'the Pagans are a waning power bound to disappear and you should strengthen your own community that they may more than counter balance the apparent loss of custom and God has other means of improving your economic position This actually happened The Pagans were extinguished from Arabia and the concourse of Pilgrims from all parts of the world increased the numbers more than a hundred fold Here is commonsense wisdom and statesmanship even if we look at it from a purely human point of view

1281 *Jizya* the root meaning is compensation The derived meaning which became the technical meaning was a poll tax levied from those who did not accept Islam but were willing to live under the protection of Islam and were thus tacitly willing to submit to its ideals being enforced in the Muslim State, saving only their personal liberty of conscience as regarded themselves There was no amount fixed for it and in any case it was merely symbolical—an acknowledgment that those whose religion was tolerated would in their turn not interfere with the preaching and progress of Islam Imām Shāfi'i suggests one *ḍinār* per year which would be the Arabian gold *ḍinār* of the Muslim States equivalent in value to about half a sovereign or about 5 to 67 rupees See n 410 to iii 75 The tax varied in amount and there were exemptions for the poor for females and children (according to Abū Ḥanifa) for slaves, and for monks and hermits Being a tax on able bodied males of military age it was in a sense a commutation for military service But see the next note

1282 *An Yadin* (literally from the hand) has been variously interpreted The hand being the symbol of power and authority, I accept the interpretation in token of willing submission The *Jizya* was thus partly symbolic and partly a commutation for military service, but as the amount was insignificant and the exemptions numerous, its symbolic character predominated See the last note

## SECTION 5

30 The Jews call 'Uzair a son<sup>1283</sup>  
Of God, and the Christians  
Call Christ the Son of God  
That is a saying from their mouth,  
(In this) they but imitate<sup>1284</sup>  
What the Unbelievers of old  
Used to say God's curse  
Be on them how they are deluded  
Away from the Truth!<sup>1285</sup>

31 They take their priests<sup>1286</sup>  
And their anchorites to be  
Their lords in derogation of God,<sup>1287</sup>  
And (they take as their Lord)  
Christ the son of Mary,  
Yet they were commanded  
To worship but One God  
There is no god but He  
Praise and glory to Him<sup>1288</sup>  
(Far is He) from having  
The partners they associate  
(With Him)

٣٠- وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُودُ عُزَيْرٌ ابْنُ اللَّهِ  
وَقَالَتِ النَّصْرَى الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ اللَّهِ  
ذَلِكَ قَوْلُهُمْ بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ  
يُضَاهُونَ قَوْلَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ  
قَاتِلْهُمْ اللَّهُ أَتَى يَوْمَئِذٍ كُفْرُهُمْ

٣١- لَتَتَّخِذُوا أَحْبَارَهُمْ وَرُهْبَانَهُمْ  
أَرْبَابًا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ  
وَالْمَسِيحَ ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ  
وَمَا أُمِرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا إِلَهًا وَاحِدًا  
لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ  
سُبْحَنَهُ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ

1283 In n 718 to v 20 I have quoted passages from the Old Testament showing how freely the expression sons of God was used by the Jews. A sect of them called Uzair a son of God, according to Baiḏḥāwī. In Appendix II (Sura v) I have shown that the constitution of Judaism dates from Uzair (Ezra). The Christians still call Christ the Son of God.

1284 Taking men for gods or sons of God was not a new thing. All ancient mythologies have fables of that kind. There was less excuse for such blasphemies after the apostles of God had clearly explained our true relation to God than in the times of primitive ignorance and superstition.

1285 Cf vii 78

1286 *Aḥbār* doctors of law, priests, learned men. Cf v 47, where they are associated with Rabbis. *Ruhbān* monks, ascetics, anchorites, men who have renounced the world, where there is a celibate clergy the term can be applied to them as well as to members of monastic orders. It is also permissible to apply the term to 'saints', where they are deified or credited with divine powers or where people pray to them as they do in the Roman Catholic Church.

1287 Priest worship and the worship of saints and ascetics is a form of superstition to which men have been prone in all ages. The growth of Jewish superstition is shown in the Talmud and of Christian superstition in the doctrine of papal infallibility and the worship of saints. The mere idea of a separate order of priesthood to stand between God and man and be the exclusive repository of God's secrets is derogatory to the goodness and all pervading grace of God. The worship of 'lords many and gods many' was not confined only to the Pagans. The deification of the son of Mary is put here in a special clause by itself, as it held (and still holds) in its thrall a large portion of civilised humanity.

1288 Cf vi 100

- 32 **E**ain would they extinguish  
God's Light with their mouths,<sup>1289</sup>  
But God will not allow  
But that His Light should be  
Perfected, even though the  
Unbelievers  
May detest (it)

٣٢- يُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يُطْفِئُوا نُورَ اللَّهِ  
بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ  
وَبِأَنبِيَ اللَّهِ إِلَّا أَنْ يُتِمَّ نُورَهُ  
وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْكَافِرُونَ ○

- 33 It is He Who hath sent  
His Apostle with Guidance  
And the Religion of Truth,  
To make it shine<sup>1290</sup>  
Above every other religion,  
Even though the Pagans  
May detest (it)

٣٣- هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَى  
وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ  
لِيُطَهِّرَهُ عَلَى الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ  
وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُشْرِكُونَ ○

- 34 Oh ye who believe! There are  
Indeed many among the priests  
And anchorites, who in falsehood<sup>1291</sup>  
Devour the substance of men  
And hinder (them) from the Way  
Of God And there are those  
Who bury gold and silver<sup>1292</sup>  
And spend it not in the Way  
Of God announce unto them  
A most grievous penalty—

٣٤- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ  
الْأَخْبَارِ وَالرُّهْبَانِ لَمَّا كُنُوا أَمْوَالِ النَّاسِ  
بِالسَّاطِلِ وَيَصُدُّونَ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَ  
الَّذِينَ يَكْتُمُونَ الذَّهَبَ وَالْفِضَّةَ وَلَا يُمْسِكُونَهَا  
فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَبَسَّ رُءُوسَهُمْ بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ○

1289 *With their mouths* there is a twofold meaning (1) the old fashioned open oil lamps were extinguished by blowing with the mouth the Unbelievers would like to blow out God's Light as it is a cause of offence to them (2) false teachers and preachers distort the Message of God by the false words of their mouth Their wish is to put out the light of Truth for they are people of darkness but God will perfect His Light & make it shine all the brighter in the eyes of men His Light in itself is ever perfect but it will penetrate the hearts of men more and more and so become more and more perfect for them

1290 Every religion which commends itself widely to human beings and lasts through some space of time has a glimpse of Truth in it But Islam is the perfect light of Truth As the greater Light through its own strength outshines all lesser lights so will Islam outshine all else in spite of the displeasure of those to whom Light is an offence

1291 *By bāṭil*—in falsehood i.e. by false pretences or in false or vain things This was strikingly exemplified in the history of Mediaeval Europe though the disease is apt to attack all peoples and organisations at all times Priests got rich by issuing indulgences and dispensations they made their office a stepping stool to worldly power and possessions Even the Monastic Orders which took vows of poverty for individuals grew rich with corporate property until their wealth became a scandal even among their own nations

1292 Misuse of wealth property and resources is frequently condemned and in three ways (1) do not acquire anything wrongfully or on false pretences (2) do not hoard or bury or amass wealth for its own sake but use it freely for good whether for yourself or for your neighbours and (3) be particularly careful not to waste it for idle purposes but only so that it may fructify for the good of the people

35 On the Day when heat<sup>1293</sup>  
Will be produced out of  
That (wealth) in the fire  
Of Hell, and with it will be  
Branded their foreheads,  
Their flanks, and their backs  
—“This is the (treasure) which ye  
Buried for yourselves <sup>1294</sup> taste ye,  
Then, the (treasures) ye buried!”

36 The number of months<sup>1295</sup>  
In the sight of God  
Is twelve (in a year)—  
So ordained by Him  
The day He created  
The heavens and the earth,  
Of them four are sacred  
That is the straight usage  
So wrong not yourselves<sup>1296</sup>  
Therein, and fight the Pagans

٣٥-يَوْمَ يُخْنِ عَلَيْهِا فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ  
تُكْوَى بِهَا جِبَاهُهُمْ وَجُنُوبُهُمْ وَ  
ظُهُورُهُمْ

هَذَا مَا كُنْتُمْ لَا نَفْسَكُمْ  
فَذُوقُوا مَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْذِبُونَ ○

٣٦-إِنَّ عِدَّةَ الشُّهُورِ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ اثْنَا عَشَرَ  
شَهْرًا فِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ يَوْمَ خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ  
وَالْأَرْضَ مِنْهَا أَرْبَعَةٌ حُرُمٌ  
ذَلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَيِّمُ فَلَا تَظْلِمُوا فِيهِنَّ  
أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَقَاتِلُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ

1293 A very striking metaphor is here used to figure forth the penalty to be suffered by those who misuse wealth for such misuse is as much a spiritual sin as any other kind of disobedience to God. Will Such misused wealth will itself become evidence against us It will be as if the gold and silver will be heated to add to the heat of Hell fire that it will brand our foreheads as reflecting on our intelligence in thinking that wealth was a good thing in itself instead of a mere means of doing good it will brand our flanks (the middle part of our body supporting the stomach the seat of greed) as showing that the greed produced no real satisfaction and it will brand our backs the source of our stability and strength as showing that wealth which might have added to our stability and strength destroys by its misuse our stability and strength

1294 The voice enforces the moral did you expect satisfaction or salvation from the treasures that you misused? Behold! they add to your torment!

1295 This and the following verse must be read together They condemn the arbitrary and selfish conduct of the Pagan Arabs who because there was a long established custom of observing four months as those in which fighting was forbidden changed the months about or added or deducted months when it suited them to get an unfair advantage over the enemy The four Prohibited Months were Zul qad Zul hajj Muharram and Rajab If it suited them they postponed one of these months and so a prohibited month became an ordinary month while their opponents might hesitate to fight they got an undue advantage It also upset the security of the Month of Pilgrimage This very ancient usage made for fair dealing all round and its infraction by the Pagans is condemned

The question of a solar astronomical year as against the lunar ecclesiastical year does not arise here But it may be noted that the Arab year was roughly luni solar like the Hindu year the months being lunar and the intercalation of a month every three years brought the year nearly but not accurately up to the solar reckoning From the year of the Farewell Pilgrimage (A H 10) the ecclesiastical year was definitely fixed as a purely lunar year of roughly 354 days the months being calculated by the actual appearance of the moon After that every month of the ecclesiastical year came about 11 days earlier in the solar year and thus the ecclesiastical months travelled all round the seasons and the solar year The lunar year remains the ecclesiastical year

1296 The Muslims were at a disadvantage on account of their scruples about the Prohibited Months They are told not to wrong themselves in this If the Pagans fought in all months on one pretence or another they were allowed to defend themselves in all months But self restraint was (as always) recommended as far as possible

All together as they  
Fight you all together  
But know that God  
Is with those who restrain  
Themselves

- 7 Verily the transposing <sup>1297</sup>  
(Of a prohibited month)  
Is an addition to Unbelief  
The Unbelievers are led  
To wrong thereby for they make  
It lawful one year,  
And forbidden another year,  
In order to adjust the number  
Of months forbidden by God  
And make such forbidden ones  
Lawful The evil of their course  
Seems pleasing to them <sup>1298</sup>  
But God guideth not  
Those who reject Faith

#### SECTION 6

- 8 **Q**h ye who believe <sup>1</sup> what  
Is the matter with you, <sup>1299</sup>  
That, when ye are asked  
To go forth in the Cause of God,  
Ye cling heavily to the earth ? <sup>1300</sup>  
Do ye prefer the life  
Of this world to the Hereafter ?  
But little is the comfort  
Of this life, as compared  
With the Hereafter

كَافَّةً كَمَا يُفَاتِلُونَكُمْ كَافَّةً  
وَاعْلَمُوا  
أَنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الْمُتَّقِينَ  
٣٧- إِنَّمَا النَّسِيءُ زِيَادَةٌ فِي الْكُفْرِ  
يُضِلُّ بِهِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا  
يُجَلِّونَهُ عَامًا وَيُخَرِّمُونَهُ عَامًا  
لِّيُؤْاِطُوا عِدَّةَ مَا حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ  
فَيُجِلُّوا مَا حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ  
زَيْنَ لَهُمْ سُوءُ أَعْمَالِهِمْ  
وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْكَافِرِينَ ٥

٣٨- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَا لَكُمْ  
إِذَا قِيلَ لَكُمْ أَنْفِرُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ  
أَنْفَلْتُمْ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ أَنْصَبْتُمْ بِالْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا  
مِنَ الْآخِرَةِ فَمَا مَتَاعُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا فِي  
الْآخِرَةِ إِلَّا قَلِيلٌ ٥

1297 To meddle with an old established custom of close time for warfare during Prohibited or Sacred Months was not only a demonstration of the Unbelievers against the Muslims on account of their Faith but was wrong and unjust in itself, as it abolished a wholesome check on unregulated warfare and prejudiced the law abiding side by arbitrary decisions

1298 Cf vi 122 The lawless man thinks he is doing a great thing in getting the better of those who are careful to observe a law they believe in But the lawless man loses the guidance of Faith, which is a symbol of his being guided by God, he will therefore lose in the end

1299 The immediate reference is to the expedition to Tabūk (A H 9), for which see the introduction to this Sūra But the lesson is perfectly general When a call is made on behalf of a great cause, the fortunate ones are those who have the privilege of responding to the call The unfortunate ones are those who are so engrossed in their parochial affairs that they turn a deaf ear to the appeal They are suffering from a spiritual disease

1300 The choice is between two courses will you choose a noble adventure and the glorious privilege of following your spiritual leader or grovel in the earth for some small worldly gain or for fear of worldly loss ? The people who hesitated to follow the call of Tabūk were deterred by (1) the heat of the summer, in which the expedition was undertaken on account of the threat to the existence of the little community, and (2) the fear of losing the fruit harvest, which was ripe for gathering



- 39 Unless ye go forth,<sup>1301</sup>  
 He will punish you  
 With a grievous penalty,  
 And put others in your place,  
 But Him ye would not harm  
 In the least For God  
 Hath power over all things
- 40 If ye help not (your Leader),  
 (It is no matter) for God  
 Did indeed help him,<sup>1302</sup>  
 When the Unbelievers  
 Drove him out he had  
 No more than one companion <sup>1303</sup>  
 They two were in the Cave,  
 And he said to his companion,  
 "Have no fear, for God  
 Is with us" then God  
 Sent down His peace upon  
 him,<sup>1304</sup>  
 And strengthened him with forces  
 Which ye saw not, and humbled <sup>1305</sup>  
 To the depths the word  
 Of the Unbelievers  
 But the word of God  
 Is exalted to the heights  
 For God is Exalted in might, Wise

٣٩- إِلَّا تَنْفِرُوا يُعَذِّبَكُمُ عَذَابُ الْيَمِينِ  
 وَيَسْتَبْدِلْ قَوْمًا غَيْرَكُمْ  
 وَلَا تَضُرُّوهُ شَيْئًا  
 وَاللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ○

٤٠- إِلَّا تَنْصُرُوهُ فَقَدْ نَصَرَهُ اللَّهُ  
 إِذْ أَخْرَجَهُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا  
 ثَانِيَ اثْنَيْنِ إِذْ هُمَا فِي الْغَارِ  
 إِذْ يَقُولُ لِصَاحِبِهِ  
 لَا تَخَظَّنْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَنَا  
 فَأَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ سَكِينَتَهُ عَلَيْهِ  
 وَأَيَّدَهُ بِجُنُودٍ لَمْ تَرَوْهَا  
 وَجَعَلَ كَلِمَةَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا السُّفْلَى  
 وَكَلِمَةَ اللَّهِ هِيَ الْعُلَا  
 وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ○

1301 *Tanfīrū* = go forth march onward be ready to strive and suffer. For this is the condition of all progress in the spiritual and moral as well as in the physical world. According to the homely English proverb God helps those who help themselves. Inactivity and lethargy are fatal. No one can rest on his oars. Man is not necessary to God but God is necessary to man. If a nation receives favours and fails to deserve them it will be replaced by another as has so often happened in history. We may take this as a special warning to Islamic nations.

1302 The Tabūk expedition was not a failure. Though many hesitated many more joined in. But a more striking example was when the Apostle was hunted out of Mecca and performed his famous *Hijra*. His enemies plotted for his life. He had already sent his followers on to Medina. 'Alī had volunteered to face his enemies in his house. His single companion was Abū Bakr. They two concealed themselves in the case of *Thaur* three miles from Mecca for three nights with the enemy prowling around in great numbers in fruitless search of them. We are but two said Abū Bakr. Nay said Muḥammad 'for God is with us. Faith gave their minds peace and God gave them safety. They reached Medina and a glorious chapter opened for Islam. The forces that helped them were not seen, but their power was irresistible.

1303 Literally 'the second of two' which afterwards became Abū Bakr's proud title.

1304 Cf ix 26

1305 The superlatives in the Arabic I have rendered by the periphrases 'humbled to the depths' and 'exalted to the heights', as they accord better with the genius of the English language. The enemies of Islam had boasted that they would root it out: the result showed them up as ridiculous and despicable.

- 41 Go ye forth, (whether equipped)<sup>1306</sup>  
 Lightly or heavily, and strive  
 And struggle, with your goods  
 And your persons, in the Cause  
 Of God That is best  
 For you, if ye (but) knew

٣١- اِنْفِرُوا خِفَافًا وَثِقَالًا  
 وَجَاهِدُوا بِأَمْوَالِكُمْ وَأَنْفُسِكُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ  
 اللَّهِ ذَلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِن كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ۝

- 42 If there had been  
 Immediate gain (in sight),  
 And the journey easy,  
 They would (all) without doubt  
 Have followed thee, but  
 The distance was long,  
 (And weighed) on them  
 They would indeed swear  
 By God, "If we only could,  
 We should certainly  
 Have come out with you "  
 They would destroy their own  
 souls,<sup>1307</sup>  
 For God doth know  
 That they are certainly lying

٣٢- لَوْ كَانَ عَرَضًا قَرِيبًا  
 وَسَفَرًا قَاصِدًا لَّا تَبَعُوا  
 وَلَكِنْ بَعُدَتْ  
 عَلَيْهِمُ الشَّيْءُ  
 وَسَيَلْفُوفُونَ ۖ  
 لَوْ اسْتَطَعْنَا لَخَرَجْنَا مَعَكُمْ  
 يُهْلِكُونَ أَنْفُسَهُمْ  
 وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ إِنَّهُمْ لَكَاذِبُونَ ۝

C 95 —The Believers do their duty, and make  
 (ix 43—72) No excuses,—unlike the Hypocrites,  
 Who are a burden whether they join you  
 Or hold back No help should be accepted  
 From these last, as they are false and insincere,  
 And have a slanderous tongue Alms  
 Are for the poor and the needy, not for those  
 Who come in hypocrisy and mock  
 At things solemn But the Hypocrites  
 Will be found out and receive due punishment,  
 While the righteous will be rewarded  
 With bliss and the good pleasure of God

1306 *Whether equipped lightly or heavily* to be taken both literally and metaphorically  
 All were invited, and they were to bring such resources as they had—light armed or heavy armed  
 on foot or mounted experienced men for posts of danger raw men for duties for which they were fit  
 All would and should help Even those who were too old or feeble to go could contribute such  
 money or resources as they had

1307 The arts and excuses of the Hypocrites are here exposed If there had been booty in  
 sight or an easy walk-over they would have come All their oaths are false and in taking the false  
 oaths they are destroying their spiritual life Indeed the backsliders are jeopardising their own  
 physical lives in hanging back If the enemy succeeded, they would all suffer

## SECTION 7

- 43 God give thee grace! <sup>1308</sup> Why  
Didst thou grant them exemption  
Until those who told the truth  
Were seen in a clear light,  
And thou hadst proved the liars?

- 44 Those who believe in God  
And the Last Day ask thee  
For no exemption from fighting  
With their goods and persons  
And God knoweth well  
Those who do their duty

45. Only those ask thee for exemption  
Who believe not in God  
And the Last Day, and  
Whose hearts are in doubt,  
So that they are tossed <sup>1309</sup>  
In their doubts to and fro

- 46 If they had intended  
To come out, they would  
Certainly have made  
Some preparations therefor,  
But God was averse  
To their being sent forth,  
So He made them lag behind,  
And they were told,  
"Sit ye among those  
Who sit (inactive) "

- 47 If they had come out  
With you, they would not

٢٣- عَفَا اللَّهُ عَنْكَ ۝

لِمَ أَذِنْتَ لَهُمْ حَتَّى يَتَبَيَّنَ لَكَ الَّذِينَ  
صَدَقُوا وَتَعْلَمَ الْكَاذِبِينَ ۝

٢٤- لَا يَسْتَأْذِنُكَ الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَ  
الْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ أَنْ يُجَاهِدُوا بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَ  
أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِالْمُتَّقِينَ ۝

٢٥- إِنَّمَا يَسْتَأْذِنُكَ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ  
بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَارْتَابَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ  
فَلَهُمْ فِي رَبِّهِمْ يَتَرَدَّدُونَ ۝

٢٦- وَلَوْ أَرَادُوا الْخُرُوجَ  
لَأَعَدُّوا لَهُ عُدَّةً  
وَلَكِنْ كَرِهَ اللَّهُ انْبِعَاثَهُمْ فَثَبَّطَهُمْ  
وَقِيلَ اقْعُدُوا  
مَعَ الْقُعُودِينَ ۝

٢٧- لَوْ خَرَجُوا فِيكُمْ مَا

1308 Literally God give thee forgiveness! But there is no question of fault here and Imām Razi understands the expression to mean an exclamation,—as one might say in English God bless you! In Shakespeare God save you! is a simple friendly greeting without any question of danger eg in Much Ado about Nothing iii 2 82 Note that in Q iii 152, last clause 'forgiveness' is put in juxtaposition to "grace", as having closely allied meanings. What the Holy Apostle had done in the Tabūk expedition was that he had been granting exemptions which may appear from a military point of view too liberal. He was actuated by motives of kindness as well as policy,—kindness, because, in the urgency of the moment he did not wish any one who had a real excuse to be refused exemption, and policy because, if any one did not come with hearty good will he would be a burden instead of a help to the army. The policy was justified, because in fact 30,000 men or more followed him. But that did not in any way justify the slackers, and in a review of the position, the slackers and hypocrites are justly condemned.

1309 Doubt takes away all stability of conduct, while Faith makes a man firm in action and cool and collected in mind.

Have added to your (strength)  
But only (made for) disorder,  
Hurrying to and fro in your  
midst <sup>1310</sup>

And sowing sedition among you,  
And there would have been  
Some among you  
Who would have listened to them  
But God knoweth well  
Those who do wrong

- 48 Indeed they had plotted  
Sedition before, and upset  
Matters for thee,—until  
The Truth arrived, and the Decree  
Of God became manifest,  
Much to their disgust <sup>1311</sup>

- 49 Among them is (many) a man  
Who says "Grant me exemption  
And draw me not <sup>1312</sup>  
Into trial" Have they not  
Fallen into trial already?  
And indeed Hell surrounds  
The Unbelievers (on all sides)

- 50 If good befalls thee,  
It grieves them, but if  
A misfortune befalls thee,  
They say, "We took indeed  
Our precautions beforehand,"  
And they turn away rejoicing

زَادُواكُمْ إِلَّا خَبَالًا  
وَلَا أَوْضَعُوا خِلَالَكُمْ  
يَبْغُونَكُمْ الْفِتْنَةَ  
وَفِيكُمْ سَاعُونَ لَهُمْ  
وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِالظَّالِمِينَ ○

٢٨- لَقَدْ ابْتَغَوْا الْفِتْنَةَ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَقَلَبُوا  
لَكَ الْأُمُورَ حَتَّى جَاءَ الْحَقُّ وَظَهَرَ  
أَمْرُ اللَّهِ وَهُمْ كَرِهُونَ ○

٢٩- وَمِنْهُمْ مَن يَقُولُ اضْطَنْ لِي وَ  
لَا تُفْتِنِي  
أَلَا فِي الْفِتْنَةِ سَقَطُوا  
وَلَئِنْ جَهَنَّمَ لَحُويْطَةٌ بِالْكَافِرِينَ ○

٥٠- إِنْ تُصِيبَكَ حَسَنَةٌ سَوْهُمْ وَإِنْ  
تُصِيبَكَ مُصِيبَةٌ  
يَقُولُوا قَدْ أَخَذْنَا أَمْرًا مِنْ قَبْلُ  
وَيَتَوَكَّلُوا وَهُمْ فَرِحُونَ ○

1310 *Khalāl* has more than one meaning, but I follow the interpretation of Rāḡib and the majority of accepted Commentators who take it to mean in your midst

1311 Evil plotters against Truth are only too glad to get an opportunity of meddling from within with affairs which they want to spoil or upset. They plot from outside, but they like to get into the inner circle that their chances of intrigue may be all the greater. They are however, unwilling to incur any danger or any self sacrifice. Their whole activities are directed to mischief. Great wisdom is required in a leader to deal with such a situation and the best of such leaders must need divine guidance as was forthcoming in this case.

1312 *Fitnat*, as explained in n 1198, viii 25 may mean either trial or temptation or else tumult, turmoil or sedition. The Commentators here take the former meaning and explain that some Hypocrites claimed exemption from service in the Tabūk expedition in the direction of Syria on the plea that they could not withstand the charms of Syrian women and ought best to stay at home. The answer is: But you have already fallen into temptation here by refusing service and disobeying the call. But perhaps the other meaning of "turmoil" may also be permissible as a secondary echo: in that case they object to be drawn into the turmoil of war but they are told that they are already in a moral turmoil in advancing a disingenuous plea. In using the English word trial in the translation I have also had in my mind the two shades of meaning associated with that word in English.

51 Say : " Nothing will happen to us  
Except what God has decreed  
For us He is our Protector "  
And on God let the Believers  
Put their trust

52 Say " Can you expect for us  
(Any fate) other than one  
Of two glorious things—  
(Martyrdom or victory) ?  
But we can expect for you  
Either that God will send  
His punishment from Himself,  
Or by our hands So wait  
(Expectant) , we too  
Will wait with you " 1313

53 Say , " Spend (for the Cause)  
Willingly or unwillingly 1314  
Not from you will it be  
Accepted for ye are indeed  
A people rebellious and wicked "

54 The only reasons why  
Their contributions are not  
Accepted are that they reject  
God and His Apostle,  
That they come to prayer  
Without earnestness, and that  
They offer contributions  
unwillingly

55 Let not their wealth  
Nor their (following in) sons 1315

٥١- قُلْ لَنْ يُصِيبَنَا إِلَّا مَا كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَنَا  
هُوَ مَوْلَانَا

وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ○  
٥٢- قُلْ هَلْ تَرْتَضُونَ بِنَا إِلَّا لِأَحَدٍ  
الْحُسْنَيْنَيْنِ وَنَحْنُ نَرْتَضِي بِكُمْ  
أَنْ يُصِيبَكُمْ اللَّهُ بِعَذَابٍ مِنْ عِنْدِهِ  
أَوْ بِأَيْدِينَا فَتَرْتَضُوا  
إِنَّا مَعَكُمْ مُتَرَاضُونَ ○

٥٣- قُلْ أَنْفِقُوا طَوْعًا أَوْ كَرْهًا  
لَنْ يُتَقَبَلَ مِنْكُمْ  
إِنْ كُنْتُمْ كُفْرًا قَوْمًا فَاسِقِينَ ○

٥٤- وَمَا مَنَعَهُمْ أَنْ تُقَبَلَ مِنْهُمْ  
نَفَقَتُهُمْ

إِلَّا أَنَّهُمْ كَفَرُوا بِاللَّهِ وَبِرَسُولِهِ  
وَلَا يَأْتُونَ الصَّلَاةَ إِلَّا وَهُمْ كُسَالَى  
وَلَا يُنْفِقُونَ إِلَّا وَهُمْ كِرْهُونَ ○

٥٥- فَلَا تُعْجِبْكَ أَمْوَالُهُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُهُمْ

1313 The waiting of the Unbelievers and that of the Believers are in different senses. The Unbelievers wish for disaster to the Believers but the Believers will either conquer or die as martyrs in the Cause in either case happy in the issue. The Believers expect punishment for the Unbelievers for their infidelity either through their own instrumentality or in some other way in God's Plan and the Unbelievers would not like it in either case. Cf vi 158

1314 The Hypocrites who secretly plotted against Islam might sometimes (and they did) make a show of making some contribution to the Cause in order to keep up their pretence. Their contributions were not acceptable whether they seemed to give willingly or unwillingly because rebellion and disobedience were in their hearts. Three reasons are specifically given for their rejection in the next verse (1) they did not believe (2) their prayers were not earnest but for mere show, and (3) in reality their hearts were not behind the contributions which they offered. Nothing is acceptable to God which does not proceed from a pure and sincere heart.

1315 If they appeared to be prosperous with their purses and their quivers full (metaphorically) they were not to be envied. In reality their wealth and their sons might themselves be a snare. Cf viii 28. On this particular occasion this was proved to the hilt. The wealth of the Pagans filled them with pride darkened their understanding and led to their destruction. Their sons and followers adopted the Faith which their fathers had fought against much to the chagrin of the fathers, whose spiritual death was even worse than their discomfiture in this world.

Dazzle thee in reality  
 God's Plan is to punish them  
 With these things in this life, <sup>1316</sup>  
 And that their souls may perish  
 In their (very) denial of God

56 They swear by God  
 That they are indeed  
 Of you, but they are not  
 Of you yet they are afraid  
 (To appear in their true colours)

57 If they could find  
 A place to flee to,  
 Or caves, or a place  
 Of concealment, they would  
 Turn straightway thereto,  
 With an obstinate rush <sup>1317</sup>

58 And among them are men  
 Who slander thee in the matter  
 Of (the distribution of) the alms <sup>1318</sup>  
 If they are given part thereof,  
 They are pleased, but if not,  
 Behold! they are indignant!

59 If only they had been content  
 With what God and His Apostle  
 Gave them, and had said,  
 "Sufficient unto us is God!"  
 He and His Apostle will soon  
 Give us of His bounty  
 To God do we turn our hopes! —  
 (That would have been the right  
 course) <sup>1319</sup>

إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُعَذِّبَهُمْ بِهَا فِي الْحَيَاةِ  
 الدُّنْيَا

وَتَزْهَقَ أَنْفُسُهُمْ وَهُمْ كَافِرُونَ ○

٥٦- وَيَجْلِفُونَ بِاللَّهِ إِنْهُمْ لَيْسَ لَكُمْ

وَمَا هُمْ مِنْكُمْ

وَلَكِنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ يَفْهَرُونَ ○

٥٧- لَوْ يَجِدُونَ مَلْجَأً أَوْ مَغْرَبًا

أَوْ مَدْخَلًا لَوَكَّلُوا إِلَيْهِ

وَهُمْ يَجْهَرُونَ ○

٥٨- وَمِنْهُمْ مَن يَلْتَمِزُكَ فِي الصَّدَقَاتِ

فَإِنْ أُعْطُوا مِنْهَا رَضُوا وَإِنْ لَمْ يُعْطُوا

مِنْهَا إِذَا هُمْ يَسْخَطُونَ ○

٥٩- وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ رَضُوا

مَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ

وَقَالُوا حَسْبُنَا اللَّهُ

سَيُؤْتِينَا اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ وَرَسُولُهُ ۚ

إِنَّا إِلَى اللَّهِ رَاغِبُونَ ۝

ع

1316 Cf iii 176 178

1317 *Jamaha*—to be ungovernable to run like a runaway horse to rush madly and obstinately

1318 *Sadaqa*—alms that which is given in God's name mainly to the poor and needy and for the cognate purposes specified in the next verse *Zakat* is the regular and obligatory charity in an organised Muslim community usually 2½ per cent of merchandise and 10 per cent on the fruits of the earth. There is a vast body of literature on this subject. The main points may be studied in the *Hudāya fil furū* of Shaikh Burhānūd dīn Alī

1319 Selfish men think that charitable funds are fair game for raids but the Islamic standards on this subject are very high. The enforcement of such standards is always unpopular and even the Holy Apostle was subjected to obloquy and slander for his strictness to principle. In doubtful cases, claimants who are disappointed should not blame the principles or those who enforce them but put their trust in God whose bounties are unbounded and are given to all whether rich or poor, according to their needs and their deserts. For every one it is excellent advice to say *deserve before you desire*

## SECTION 8

60 Alms are for the poor  
And the needy, and those  
Employed to administer the (funds),  
For those whose hearts  
Have been (recently) reconciled  
(To Truth), for those in bondage  
And in debt, in the cause  
Of God, and for the wayfarer <sup>1320</sup>  
(Thus is it) ordained by God,  
And God is full of knowledge  
And wisdom

61 Among them are men  
Who molest the Prophet  
And say, "He is (all) ear" <sup>1321</sup>  
Say, "He listens to what is  
Best for you he believes  
In God, has faith  
In the Believers, and is a Mercy  
To those of you who believe"  
But those who molest the Apostle  
Will have a grievous penalty

62 To you they swear by God,  
In order to please you  
But it is more fitting  
That they should please  
God and His Apostle,  
If they are Believers

٦٠- إِنَّمَا الصَّدَقَتُ لِلْفُقَرَاءِ وَالسَّكِينِ  
وَالْعَمِلِينَ عَلَيْهَا وَالْمُؤَلَّفَةِ قُلُوبُهُمْ  
وَفِي الرِّقَابِ وَالْغَارِمِينَ  
وَفِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ  
قَرْنَةً مِّنَ اللَّهِ  
وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ٥

٦١- وَمِنْهُمْ الَّذِينَ يُؤْذُونَ النَّبِيَّ  
وَيَقُولُونَ هُوَ أُذُنٌ قُلْ أُذُنٌ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ  
يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَيُؤْمِنُ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَرَحْمَةٌ  
لِّلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْذُونَ  
رَسُولَ اللَّهِ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ٥

٦٢- يَخْلِفُونَ بِاللَّهِ لَكُمْ لِيُرْضَوْكُمْ  
وَاللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَحَقُّ أَنْ يُرْضَوْهُ  
إِنْ كَانُوا مُؤْمِنِينَ ٥

1320 Alms or charitable gifts are to be given to the poor and the needy and those who are employed in their service. That is charitable funds are not to be diverted to other uses, but the genuine expenses of administering charity are properly chargeable to such funds. Who are the needy? Besides the ordinary indigent there are certain classes of people whose need is great and should be relieved. Those mentioned here are (1) men who have been weaned from hostility to Truth who would probably be persecuted by their former associates, and require assistance until they establish new connections in their new environment, (2) those in bondage literally and figuratively, captives of war must be redeemed, slaves should be helped to freedom, those in the bondage of ignorance or superstition or unfavourable environment should be helped to freedom to develop their own gifts, (3) those who are held in the grip of debt should be helped to economic freedom, (4) those who are struggling and striving in God's Cause, by teaching or fighting or duties assigned to them by the righteous Imām who are thus unable to earn their ordinary living, and (5) strangers stranded on the way. All these have a claim to charity. They should be relieved by individual or organised effort, but in a responsible way.

1321 The assonance of the Arabic words *yūḥannu* and *uḥunnu* is of course lost in the Translation. But the sense remains. Detractors of the Prophet said, Oh! he listens to every body! Yes, is the answer 'he listens for their good, he is a mercy and a blessing to all men of Faith, but specially to you (who are addressed)'. The general statement is emphasised for the particular people addressed.

- 53 Know they not that for those  
Who oppose God and His  
Apostle,  
Is the Fire of Hell?—  
Wherein they shall dwell  
That is the supreme disgrace

٦٣- أَلَمْ يَعْلَمُوا أَنَّهُ مِّنْ عِندِ اللَّهِ وَ  
رَسُولِهِ فَأَنَّ لَهُ نَارَ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدًا فِيهَا  
ذَلِكَ الْخِزْيُ الْعَظِيمُ ○

54. The Hypocrites are afraid<sup>1322</sup>  
Lest a Sūra should be sent down  
About them, showing them what  
Is (really passing) in their hearts  
Say "Mock ye! But verily  
God will bring to light all  
That ye fear (should be revealed)"

٦٤- يَحْذَرُ الْمُنَافِقُونَ أَنْ تُنْزَلَ عَلَيْهِمْ  
سُورَةٌ تُنَبِّئُهُمْ بِمَا فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ  
قُلِ اسْتَخِرُوا إِنْ أَرَادَ اللَّهُ  
مُخْرِجَ مَا تَحْذَرُونَ ○

- 55 If thou dost question them,  
They declare (with emphasis)  
"We were only talking idly  
And in play" Say "Was it  
At God, and His Signs,  
And His Apostle, that ye  
Were mocking?"

٦٥- وَلَئِنْ سَأَلْتَهُمْ  
لَيَقُولُنَّ إِنَّمَا كُنَّا نَخُوضُ وَنَلْعَبُ  
قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ أَيَّ آيَاتِهِ وَرَسُولِهِ  
كُنْتُمْ تَسْتَهْزِءُونَ ○

- 56 Make ye no excuses  
Ye have rejected Faith  
After ye had accepted it  
If We pardon some of you,  
We will punish others amongst you,  
For that they are in sin<sup>1323</sup>

٦٦- لَا تَعْتَذِرُوا قَدْ كَفَرْتُمْ بَعْدَ إِيمَانِكُمْ  
إِنْ نَعْفَ عَنْ طَائِفَةٍ مِّنْكُمْ نُعَذِّبْ  
طَائِفَةً ۚ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ كَانُوا مُجْرِمِينَ ○

## SECTION 9

- 57 The Hypocrites, men and  
women,  
(Have an understanding) with each  
other<sup>1324</sup>

٦٧- الْمُنَافِقُونَ وَالْمُنَافِقَاتُ بَعْضُهُمْ  
مِّنْ بَعْضٍ ○

1322 The dissection of the motives of the Hypocrites alarmed them. For it meant that they would fail in their policy of having the best of both worlds and undermining the loyalty of the weaker members of the Muslim community. So they turn it off as a jest. But they are sharply rebuked. Can you make such solemn matters subjects of playful jokes? Fie upon you! You are found out and your guile is of no effect. In fact many of the Hypocrites turned over a new leaf and became good Believers afterwards while a few definitely threw in their lot with the open enemies of Islam and shared their fate. This is referred to in the next verse but one.

1323 See last note. Hypocrisy is a half way house—a state of indecision in the choice between good and evil. Those who definitely range themselves with good obtain forgiveness; those who pass definitely to evil suffer the penalties of evil.

1324 Literally 'the Hypocrites are of each other'. The forms of hypocrisy may vary, but they are all alike, and they understand each other's hypocrisy. They hold together.



They enjoin evil, and forbid  
What is just, and are close <sup>1325</sup>  
With their hands. They have  
Forgotten God, and He <sup>1326</sup>  
Hath forgotten them Verily  
The Hypocrites are rebellious  
And perverse

- 68 God hath promised the Hypocrites  
Men and women, and the rejecters,  
Of Faith, the fire of Hell  
Therein shall they dwell  
Sufficient is it for them  
For them is the curse of God, <sup>1327</sup>  
And an enduring punishment,—

- 69 As in the case of those  
Before you they were  
Mightier than you in power,  
And more flourishing in wealth  
And children They had  
Their enjoyment of their portion  
And ye have of yours, as did  
Those before you, and ye  
Indulge in idle talk  
As they did They <sup>1</sup>—  
Their works are fruitless  
In this world and in the Hereafter,  
And they will lose  
(All spiritual good)

- 70 Hath not the story reached them  
Of those before them?—  
The people of Noah, and 'Ad, <sup>1328</sup>  
And Thamūd, the people

يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمُنْكَرِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمَعْرُوفِ  
وَيَقْبِضُونَ أَيْدِيَهُمْ  
نَسُوا اللَّهَ فَنَسِيَهُمْ  
إِنَّ الْمُنْفِقِينَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ ○

٦٨- وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الْمُنَافِقِينَ وَالْمُنَافِقَاتِ  
الْكُفَّارَ نَارَ حَهَمٍ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا  
هِيَ حَسْمُهُمْ وَلَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ  
وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُّقِيمٌ ○

٦٩- كَالَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ كَانُوا أَشَدَّ  
مِنْكُمْ قُوَّةً وَآكَلُوا أَمْوَالًا وَأَوْلَادًا  
فَاسْتَمْتَعُوا بِخَلَائِقِهِمْ فَاسْتَمْتَعْتُمْ  
بِخَلَائِقِكُمْ كَمَا اسْتَمْتَعَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ  
بِخَلَائِقِهِمْ وَخَضْتُمْ كَالَّذِينَ خَاصُوا  
أُولَئِكَ حَبِطَتْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ فِي الدُّبَا  
وَالْآخِرَةِ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ ○

٧٠- أَلَمْ يَأْتِهِمْ بَأْسُ الَّذِينَ  
قَوْمِ نُوحٍ وَعَادٍ وَثَمُودَ وَقَوْمِ

1325 The English phrase close fisted would cover only a part of the meaning The hand is the symbol of power help and assistance This may be financial or it may be in other ways The Hypocrites pretend a great deal but are of no use or real help to any one

1326 Cf vii 51 and n 1029 They ignore God and God will ignore them

1327 Curse here as elsewhere is deprivation of grace and mercy brought about by the rejection of God by the Unbelievers

1328 The story of Noah is told in vii 59-64, of 'Ad in vii 65-72 and of Thamūd in vii 73-79, of Abraham in numerous places, but see specially vi 74-82, of Midianites in vii 85-93, and of Lot and the Cities of the Plain overthrown for their wickedness, in vii 80-84



## SECTION 10

73 **O**h Prophet! strive hard against  
The Unbelievers and the  
Hypocrites,  
And be firm against them  
Their abode is Hell,—  
An evil refuge indeed

٤٢- يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ جَاهِدِ الْكُفَّارَ  
وَالْمُنَافِقِينَ وَاغْلُظْ عَلَيْهِمْ  
وَمَا لَهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ  
وَبُئْسَ الْمَصِيرُ ○

74 They swear by God that they  
Said nothing (evil), but indeed  
They uttered blasphemy,  
And they did it after accepting  
Islam, and they meditated<sup>1331</sup>  
A plot which they were unable  
To carry out this revenge  
Of theirs was (their) only return  
For the bounty with which  
God and His Apostle had enriched  
Them! If they repent,  
It will be best for them,  
But if they turn back  
(To their evil ways),  
God will punish them  
With a grievous penalty  
In this life and in the Hereafter  
They shall have none on earth  
To protect or help them

٤٣- يَخْلِفُونَ بِاللَّهِ مَا قَالُوا  
وَلَقَدْ قَالُوا كَلِمَةَ الْكُفْرِ  
وَكَفَرُوا بَعْدَ إِسْلَامِهِمْ  
وَهُتُوا بِمَا لَمْ يَنْتَلُوا وَمَا نَقَمُوا إِلَّا  
أَنْ أَغْنَاهُمْ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ  
فَإِنْ يَتُوبُوا يَكُ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ  
وَلَنْ يَتُوبُوا يُعَذِّبُهُمُ اللَّهُ  
عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا  
فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ  
وَمَا لَهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ  
مِنْ وَلِيٍّ وَلَا نَصِيرٍ ○

75 Amongst them are men  
Who made a Covenant with God,  
That if He bestowed on them  
Of His bounty, they would give  
(Largely) in charity, and be truly  
Amongst those who are righteous

٤٤- وَمِنْهُمْ مَن عَاهَدَ اللَّهُ  
لَئِنْ آتَاهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ لَنَصَّدَّقَنَّ  
وَلَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ ○

1331 The reference is to a plot made by the Apostle's enemies to kill him when he was returning from Tabūk. The plot failed. It was all the more dastardly in that some of the conspirators were among the men of Medina, who were enriched by the general prosperity that followed the peace and good government established through Islam in Medina. Trade flourished, justice was firmly administered with an even hand. And the only return that these men could make was a return of evil for good. That was their revenge, because Islam aimed at suppressing selfishness, stood for the rights of the poorest and humblest, and judged worth by righteousness rather than by birth or position.

76 But when He did bestow  
Of His bounty, they became  
Covetous, and turned back  
(From their Covenant), averse  
(From its fulfilment)

٤٦- فَلَمَّا أَتَاهُمْ مِن فَضْلِهِ  
بَخِلُوا بِهِ وَتَوَلَّوْا  
وَهُمْ مُّعْرِضُونَ ○

77 So He hath put as a  
consequence <sup>1332</sup>

Hypocrisy into their hearts,  
(To last) till the Day whereon  
They shall meet Him because  
They broke their Covenant  
With God, and because they  
Lied (again and again)

٤٧- فَأَعْقَبَهُمْ نِفَاقًا فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ  
إِلَى يَوْمٍ يَلْقَوْنَ  
بِهَا أَخْلَقُوا اللَّهَ مَا وَعَدُوهُ  
وَبِهَا كَانُوا يَكْذِبُونَ ○

78 Know they not that God  
Doth know their secret (thoughts)  
And their secret counsels,  
And that God knoweth well  
All things unseen?

٤٨- أَلَمْ يَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ سِرَّهُمْ  
وَنَجْوَاهُمْ  
وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ ○

79 Those who slander such  
Of the Believers as give themselves  
Freely to (deeds of) charity,  
As well as such as can find  
Nothing to give except  
The fruits of their labour,—  
And throw ridicule on them,— <sup>1333</sup>  
God will throw back

٤٩- الَّذِينَ يَلْمِزُونَ الْمُطَّوِّعِينَ مِنَ  
الْمُؤْمِنِينَ فِي الصَّدَقَاتِ  
وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَجِدُونَ إِلَّا جُهْدَهُمْ  
فَيَسْخَرُونَ مِنْهُمْ

1332 If men are false to their covenants and words the natural consequence will be hypocrisy to cover their falsehood All consequences of our own acts are in Quranic language ascribed to God Such consequences will last till the Day of Judgment when they will have to account for their deeds They may think that they are deceiving men by their hypocrisy but they cannot deceive God to Whom all their most secret thoughts and plots and doings are known

1333 When financial help is necessary for the Cause every Muslim contributes what he can Those who can afford large sums are proud to bring them in of their own free-will and those who are very poor contribute their mite Both kinds of gifts are equally precious because of the faith and good will behind them, and only cynics will laugh at the scantiness of the one or the lavishness of the other Sometimes they not only laugh but attribute wrong motives to the givers Such conduct is here reprimanded

Their ridicule on them  
And they shall have  
A grievous penalty

- 80 Whether thou ask  
For their forgiveness,  
Or not, (their sin is unforgivable)  
If thou ask seventy times,<sup>1334</sup>  
For their forgiveness, God  
Will not forgive them  
Because they have rejected  
God and His Apostle and God  
Guideth not those  
Who are perversely rebellious

#### SECTION 11

- 81 Those who were left behind  
(In the Tabūk expedition)  
Rejoiced in their inaction  
Behind the back of the Apostle  
Of God they hated to strive  
And fight, with their goods  
And their persons, in the Cause  
Of God they said,  
"Go not forth in the heat"<sup>1335</sup>  
Say, "The fire of Hell  
Is fiercer in heat" If  
Only they could understand!

- 82 Let them laugh a little.  
Much will they weep<sup>1336</sup>

سَخَّرَ اللَّهُ مِنْهُمْ  
وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ٥

٨٠- اِسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ  
اَوْ لَا تَسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ  
اِنْ تَسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ سَبْعِينَ مَرَّةً  
فَلَنْ يَغْفِرَ اللَّهُ لَهُمْ  
ذَلِكَ بِاَنَّهُمْ كَفَرُوا بِاللّٰهِ وَرَسُولِهِ  
وَاللّٰهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْفٰسِقِيْنَ ٥

٨١- فَرِحَ الْمُخَلَّفُونَ بِمَقْعَدِهِمْ خَلْفَ  
رَسُولِ اللّٰهِ  
وَكَرِهُوا اَنْ يُجَاهِدُوا  
بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللّٰهِ  
وَقَالُوا لَا تَنْفِرُوا فِي الْحَرِّ  
قُلْ نَارُ جَهَنَّمَ اَشَدُّ حَرًّا  
لَوْ كَانُوا يَفْقَهُوْنَ ٥

٨٢- فَلْيَضْحَكُوا قَلِيْلًا وَلْيَبْكُوا كَثِيْرًا ٥

1334 An awful warning for those who actively oppose the Cause of God The Holy Apostle was by nature full of mercy and forgiveness He prayed for his enemies But in such a case even his prayers are nullified by their attitude of rejecting God

1335 The Tabūk expedition had to be undertaken hurriedly in the heat of summer, because of a threat or fear of Byzantine invasion They marched from Medina about the month of September or October in the solar calendar

1336 They may sneer or ridicule or rejoice now. that will be only for a little, much will they have to weep for afterwards

A recompense for the (evil)  
That they do

- 83 If, then, God bring thee back  
To any of them, and they ask  
Thy permission to come out  
(With thee), say "Never shall ye  
Come out with me, nor fight  
An enemy with me  
For ye preferred to sit  
Inactive on the first occasion  
Then sit ye (now)  
With those who lag behind "

- 84 Nor do thou ever pray  
For any of them that dies,  
Nor stand at his grave, <sup>13 7</sup>  
For they rejected God  
And His Apostle, and died  
In a state of perverse rebellion

- 85 Nor let their wealth  
Nor their (following in) sons  
Dazzle thee God's Plan  
Is to punish them  
With these things in this world,  
And that their souls may perish  
In their (very) denial of God <sup>1398</sup>

جَزَاءٍ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ ○

٨٣ فَإِنْ رَحِمَكَ اللَّهُ إِلَى طَائِفَةٍ مِنْهُمْ  
فَاسْتَأْذِنُوكَ لِلْخُرُوجِ  
فَقُلْ لَنْ تَخْرُجُوا مَعِيَ أَبَدًا  
وَلَنْ تُقَاتِلُوا مَعِيَ عَدُوًّا  
إِنَّكُمْ رَضِيتُمْ بِالْقُعُودِ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ  
فَاعْزُدُوا مَعَ الْخَالِفِينَ ○

٨٤ وَلَا تَصِلْ عَلَى أَحَدٍ مِنْهُمْ قَاتٍ  
أَبَدًا وَلَا تَقُمْ عَلَى قَبْرِهِ  
إِنَّهُمْ كَفَرُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ  
وَمَاتُوا وَهُمْ فَسِقُونَ ○

٨٥ وَلَا تُعْجِبْكَ أَمْوَالُهُمْ وَأَوْلَادُهُمْ  
إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ  
أَنْ يُعَذِّبَهُمْ بِهَا فِي الدُّنْيَا  
وَتَزْهَقَ أَنْفُسُهُمْ  
وَهُمْ كَافِرُونَ ○

1337 On the death of a Muslim, it is the pious duty of every neighbouring Muslim who can, to assist in the simple funeral ceremonies the prayer for mercy before the body is consigned to the grave and the consignment of the body to the grave by a simple solemn and dignified ritual in which the rest stand by the grave side For those who have shown hostility to Islam this would not be seemly and is forbidden

1338 Except for the omission of a single word ( 'life ' ) this verse repeats verse 55 above But the repetition indicates the harmonious closing of the same argument in two aspects In ix 55 it occurred in connection with the reasons for refusing to receive the contributions of such persons to the expenses of an enterprise which though vital to Islam's defence was secretly opposed by such persons Here (in ix 85) it is a question of refusing to participate in the obsequies of such persons after their death it is natural to omit the word life in this case

86 **W**hen a Sūra comes down,  
 Enjoining them to believe  
 In God and to strive and fight  
 Along with His Apostle,  
 Those with wealth and influence  
 Among them ask thee  
 For exemption, and say  
 "Leave us (behind) we  
 Would be with those  
 Who sit (at home) "

87 They prefer to be with  
 (the women),  
 Who remain behind (at home) <sup>1339</sup>  
 Their hearts are sealed  
 And so they understand not

88 But the Apostle, and those  
 Who believe with him,  
 Strive and fight with their wealth  
 And their persons for them  
 Are (all) good things <sup>1340</sup>  
 For them is prosperity

89 God hath prepared for them  
 Gardens under which rivers flow,

٨٦- وَإِذَا أَنْزَلَتْ سُورَةٌ أَنْ أْمِنُوا  
 بِاللَّهِ وَجَاهِدُوا  
 مَعَ رَسُولِهِ  
 اسْتَأْذَنَكَ أُولُوا الطَّوْلِ مِنْهُمْ  
 وَقَالُوا ذَرْنَا  
 نَكُنْ مَعَ الْقَاعِدِينَ ○

٨٧- رَضُوا بِأَنْ يَكُونُوا مَعَ الْخَوَالِفِ  
 وَطُبِعَ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ  
 فَهُمْ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ ○

٨٨- لَكِنَّ الرُّسُولَ وَالَّذِينَ أْمَنُوا  
 مَعَهُ جَاهَدُوا بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ  
 وَأُولَئِكَ لَهُمُ الْخَيْرَاتُ  
 وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ○

٨٩- أَعَدَّ اللَّهُ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ

1339 *Khawālif* plural of *Khālifa* those (feminine) who remain behind at home when the men go to war women There is a stinging taunt in this, a suggestion that such men were cowards, preferring to remain behind like women when stiff work was to be done by men in defending their homes They were not only cowards but fools as they did not understand their own best interests If the enemy got the better of their brethren they would themselves be crushed Their hearts are sealed the habits of cowardice and hypocrisy which they have adopted have become their second nature

1340 "Good things" and "prosperity", are to be understood both in the physical and in the highest spiritual sense as the next verse makes clear

To dwell therein .  
That is the supreme felicity <sup>1341</sup>

## SECTION 12

90 And there were, among  
The desert Arabs (also),  
Men who made excuses  
And came to claim exemption ,  
And those who were false  
To God and His Apostle  
(Merely) sat inactive <sup>1342</sup>  
Soon will a grievous penalty  
Seize the Unbelievers  
Among them

91 There is no blame <sup>1343</sup>  
On those who are infirm,

تَحْتَمِلُ الْإِنْفَرُ خُلْدَيْنِ فِيهَا  
ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ ۝

٩٠- وَجَاءَ الْمُعَذِّرُونَ مِنَ الْأَعْرَابِ  
لِيُؤْذَنَ لَهُمْ وَقَعَدَ الَّذِينَ  
كَذَّبُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ  
سَيُصِيبُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْهُمْ  
عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ۝

٩١- لَيْسَ عَلَى الضَّعَفَاءِ

1341 In this verse there is a reminiscence but not an exact repetition of verse 72 above. This balances the parallel repetition or reminiscence in verse 85 above. See n 1338. The symmetry of the argument is thus completed as regards the Hypocrites of Medina before we pass on to consider the case of the Hypocrites among the desert Bedouins in section 12.

1342 Not only had the Hypocrites a nest in Medina but their tactics affected some of the village or desert Bedouins, who loved war and would have followed a standard of war even if no question of Faith or a sacred Cause was involved. But some of them though professing Islam were frightened by the hardships of the Tabuk expedition and the prospect of meeting the trained armies of the great Roman (Byzantine) Empire. They made all sorts of lying excuses, but really their want of faith made them ineligible for being enlisted in a sacred Cause in the terms of ix 46-47 and ix 53-54. Some came to make excuses others did not even come but sat at home, ignoring the summons.

1343 Though active service in person or by contributing resources is expected in emergencies of every person who believes in the Cause there are some who must necessarily be exempted without the least blame attaching to them. Such would be those who are weak in body on account of age, sex, infirmity, or illness. Personal service in their case is out of the question but they could contribute towards expenses if they are able. But if they are too poor to afford even such assistance, they are excused. But in all cases the motive must be sincere, and there should be a desire to serve and do such duty as they can. With such motives people are doing good or right in whatever form they express their service. Sometimes, in Milton's words, "they also serve who only stand and wait." In any case their purity of motive would get God's grace and forgiveness, and we must not criticise even if we thought they might have done more.



Or ill, or who find  
 No resources to spend  
 (On the Cause), if they  
 Are sincere (in duty) to God  
 And His Apostle  
 No ground (of complaint)  
 Can there be against such  
 As do right and God  
 Is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful

- 92 Nor (is there blame)  
 On those who came to thee  
 To be provided with mounts,<sup>1344</sup>  
 And when thou saidst,  
 "I can find no mounts  
 For you," they turned back,  
 Their eyes streaming with tears  
 Of grief that they had  
 No resources wherewith  
 To provide the expenses

- 93 The ground (of complaint)  
 Is against such as claim  
 Exemption while they are rich  
 They prefer to stay  
 With the (women) who remain  
 Behind God hath sealed  
 10 Their hearts, so they know not  
 30 (What they miss) <sup>1345</sup>

وَلَا عَلَى الْمَرْضَى وَلَا عَلَى الَّذِينَ لَا  
 يَجِدُونَ  
 مَا يُنْفِقُونَ حَرْجٍ إِذَا نَصَحُوا اللَّهَ وَ  
 رَسُولَهُ مَا عَلَى الْخُسَيْنِينَ مِنْ سَبِيلٍ  
 وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

٩٢- وَلَا عَلَى الَّذِينَ إِذَا مَا أَتَوْكَ  
 لِتَحْمِلَهُمْ قُلْتَ لَا أَجِدُ مَا أَحْمِلُكُمْ  
 عَلَيْهِمْ  
 تَوَلَّوْا وَأَعْيُنُهُمْ تَفِيضُ مِنَ الدَّمْعِ  
 حَزْنًا  
 أَلَّا يَجِدُوا مَا يُنْفِقُونَ

٩٣- إِنَّمَا السَّبِيلُ عَلَى الَّذِينَ  
 يَسْتَأْذِنُونَكَ وَهُمْ أَغْنَاءُ  
 رَضُوا بِأَنْ يَكُونُوا مَعَ الْخَوَالِفِ  
 وَطَبَعَ اللَّهُ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ  
 فَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

1344 *Hamala yahmilu* here seems to mean to provide means of transport i.e. mounts (horses, camels, etc.) for riding and perhaps beasts of burden for carrying equipment and baggage suitable to the rank of those concerned. It may possibly mean other facilities for getting about such as boots and shoes, or provisions. For an army's march depends upon all these things. Where people fight as volunteers for a cause without an extensive war fund those who can afford it provide such things for themselves but those without means yet anxious to serve have to be left behind. Their disappointment is in proportion to their eagerness to serve.

1345 (cf ix. 87 where similar phrases are used for a similar shirking of duty by townsfolk while here we are considering the desert folk. It is not only a duty, but a precious privilege to serve a great Cause by personal self sacrifice. Those who shirk such an opportunity know not what they miss.

